NEW MASSES

JUNE 8, 1943 15 ¢ In Canada 20¢

HOW FRANCE WILL WIN

By FERNAND GRENIER, Communist Member,

Fighting French National Committee

COMINTERN AFTERMATH

By A. LANDY

DETROIT: MUSCLE BOUND GIANT

How incentive pay would help the workers and production.

By A. B. MAGIL

CRIME WAVE

***A Short Story* by ALBERT HALPER**

WAR MENU AT THE FOOD CONFERENCE

By BRUCE MINTON

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NM goes to a Party!

It wasn't a very big one but the spirit was something we've never seen in a Broadway hot spot. Some twenty people had come together, as people often come together on a Saturday evening, for a round of refreshments, several rounds of good talk, and some entertainment. The fact that it had still another purpose, to raise funds for NEW MASSES, cramped nobody's style. On the contrary: it seemed, in fact, to create a little additional zip. And out of that gathering came nearly a hundred dollars to keep NM alive and fighting.

A number of such parties have been held, some larger, some smaller. A reader in Honolulu recently sent in $73 raised in this fashion. It isn't hard; indeed, it's the best way yet found to do a good deed and have fun at it too. And it brings us that much closer to that vital $40,000 for this year.

We hope to close this fund drive in another two weeks. To date, NM has raised $26,200. However, we, as much as you, want to devote this space to some of the thousand urgent subjects for discussion in our pages. Will you enable us to do that? Will you cooperate, not only by your direct contributions but by following the example of others? Give a party; turn your Saturday night gatherings into a party for NM.

This week we're asking for a different kind of pledge: a party for NEW MASSES. Will you do this? Will you pledge a party to take place within the next two months? If you like, we shall be more than happy to send you suggestions on how to make the affair as successful as possible. Please let us hear from you—soon.

(For your response to the fund drive, please use coupon on page 28.)

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NM SPOTLIGHT

Closer to Zero Hour

By now Hitler, his Roman proconsul, and the sword swallowers in Tokyo have probably divided, added, and subtracted every syllable of President Roosevelt's laconic statement on the White House conference—but found nothing with which to unlock the future of Allied military plans. The combined staffs have done their work for the present and while Mr. Churchill in his public utterances here indicated the drift of the Washington discussions, time alone, as the maxim puts it, will tell the whole story. It is clear, though, that the initiative is decidedly in our hands and what is urgent is the application of overwhelming force to the European continent without stopping at its periphery. Allied air blows are setting the stage. The convulsions they have created in Nazi industrial centers will reduce Germany's productive potential, thereby tightening the noose around the Wehrmacht.

There is considerable justice in the criticism, however, that too much emphasis is being placed on the "experiment" from the clouds. No one familiar with recent technical innovations in air power or the fresh tactics being employed in air combat will deny that our fliers can do immensely greater damage than was possible a year or two ago. But defensive measures have also been improved and the area under attack is several times larger than that on which the Luftwaffe concentrated when it was trying to raze England to the ground.

Nor can the increase in the number of our planes compensate for the size of the territory they must cover. Tunisia taught us that unconditional surrender is the reward of *closely integrated air and land fighting*. The lesson applies with even greater force to Europe. "Soft war" theories and Maginot line complexes will not bring Schicklgruber to his knees.

Meanwhile, the commander of American forces in Europe, Lieut.-Gen. Jacob Devers, noted in a broadcast last week that "all plans have been put in execution for whatever role this theater may be called upon to play in an invasion of the continent." A spokesman for the Netherlands government in London also reported that 100,000 Dutch soldiers are hiding in their occupied homeland and ready for action when the Allies land. And the French underground has already outlined its plans for a coordinated assault. The hour, then, moves closer to zero and we can only hope that the plans evolved in the White House include the following epitaph for Hitler—"Annihilated in the summer of 1943."

"Excuse, honorable devil, but the emperor thinks that Hell should be included in the Greater Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere."

The first word of that epitaph has already been written in the Anglo-Soviet pact whose first anniversary was celebrated a few days ago, and in the American-Soviet agreement which will be a year old on June 11. Both events were turning points in world history, for they provided the foundation of coalition warfare and paved the way for the settlement of the peace after total victory. How gigantic a stride forward this alliance represents can only be measured by Berlin's superhuman efforts to destroy it. And while there have been bleak moments in the relations of all three powers, they have been overcome by the even bleaker realization that they would hang separately if they did not hang together. Now with Ambassador Davies returning after his second mission to Moscow, the atmosphere is filled with the fondest expectations that American-Soviet bonds will become firmer than ever. The New York *Herald Tribune*, among the most faithful partisans of an indestructible union of both countries, has already suggested that the United States put her own policy on a "similarly solid ground" as that which already exists between Downing Street and the Kremlin.

The chairman of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, Corliss Lamont, has expressed his accord with the *Tribune's* advice. We have little to add except to underscore again that all steps—military and political—taken by our government to cement cooperation with the USSR bring closer the day of final triumph and ensure an orderly world free of blood and tears. American labor, in this respect, has a particular responsibility in hastening all moves for more intimate ties with the British and Soviet trade unions.

The Battle in China

A map of central China shaded to indicate the regions occupied by the enemy will show them in possession of a thin strip of land on either bank of the Yangtze River stretching from the river's mouth near Shanghai way back into the heart of the nation, to a point just beyond

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the important city of Ichang. There are three areas on this long strip of territory that merit especial attention today: One, at the eastern end, loops south and southwest along the railway that crosses Chekiang province. Another thrusts directly south of Kiukiang on the Yangtze over the entire length of the railway connecting that city with the important center of Nanchang. The third is a great bulge at the upper or western end of the occupation strip, covering a vast circle of agricultural land north and south of a diameter formed by the Yangtze River as it connects Hankow with Ichang. It is against the western periphery of this latter bulge that the recent Japanese drive has been pressing.

Chinese sources say that 70,000 to 80,000 Japanese troops, about 200 planes, an impressive equipment of tanks and artillery, and a heavy concentration of Japan's Yangtze River fleet are engaged in the current campaign. Reports in the American press have given the impression that some responsible government officials in Chungking are fearful that Japan's long-awaited drive to capture the capital and virtually to cut China in two is under way. Surely there is reason for alarm when it is realized that enemy forces in this area are now operating well within 300 miles as a plane flies from Chungking, though the routes that must be followed to reach that center by land or river involve a much lengthier journey.

It is doubtful, however, whether the Japanese can succeed in pushing much further to the west; it is doubtful whether they want to. Ichang marks the end of the central China plain and the beginning of the high mountains and the famous Yangtze gorges that must be traversed or navigated before reaching the fertile areas of western China. Japan's already extended lines of communication along the thin Yangtze strip cannot be further lengthened without laying the entire line open to the counter-strategy so often successfully employed by the poorly equipped Chinese troops. Even in their present positions, moreover, the Chinese are already inflicting such punishing attacks along the edges of the Japanese advance as to suggest that the limits of the present offensive may have been reached.

IT HAS been suggested before in these columns that the Japanese are primarily engaged in economic warfare against Free China, partly because they believe it will succeed in crushing Chinese resistance before United Nations help can arrive, and partly because any alternative strategy would be too costly in the men and equipment that must stand guard against the Soviet Union in the north, against a threatened British-American-Indian attack into Burma, and against the growing thrusts of American forces over the boundless distances from Attu to the Solomons. A comparison of the map of Japanese occupation in central China with a topographical map will bear this out, for it shows that the occupied areas, including the three areas that have been described, coincide almost exactly with the green, fertile valleys that designate China's rice bowl. There is reason to suppose, therefore, that Japan's present campaign is designed primarily to ruin next fall's crop now planted. Belief that this is the present Japanese objective can be no less distressing to American readers, knowing as they do the already frightful condition of Chinese economy. And undoubtedly the Axis hopes that this drive will divert our attention from the paramount importance of concentrating on the immediate opening of land invasions of the European continent to defeat Hitler, the strategy which will surely spell the Mikado's ultimate doom.

Goering Maw

REUTERS reported earlier last week that the splendid representative of the Nazi beef trust, Herman Goering, has embarked on a new diet consisting of 45,000,000 German Catholics as well as the Church hierarchy. The menu of course is not new; it has for a long time been part of Nazidom's rationing system. But now the Nazi appetite is bigger than ever. An unconcealed declaration of hostilities is directed against all Catholics who refuse to accept racism or who engage in anti-fascist movements. The tactics of the new offensive and the character of the reprisals are not yet clear. In any event, they undoubtedly will find their parallels in the barbarities heaped upon Jews and Protestants and all peoples who will not submit mind and body to the *herrenvolk*. Interestingly enough the announcement was first made over the Berlin controlled Paris radio. And that fact immediately suggests what the bankrupt Laval and his retinue of Vichyites have in store for French Catholics who have been operating in the underground.

Among the most recent expressions of Catholic opposition within Germany was a pastoral letter drawn up by a conference of bishops held at Fulda, May 1942, and reaching this country at the close of the year. The letter denounced the "unrestricted anti-religious agitation of party officers" and the "rampart of bitterness and enmity" erected around Germany in the occupied territories. It described Nazi morality as being on the "same level as an animal or not much higher." To be sure, it was a passive though angry document. But its effect on sections of the Catholic world was to delineate the face of the enemy more clearly. For there have been those who would use Catholicism as a cloak to hide their participation in anti-democratic movements, in compromise peace projects, in anti-Semitism—always the reflex of anti-Catholicism. By their Coughlinite politics they have done great harm to the mass of Catholics everywhere and degraded Christ's teachings of equality. And so long as Vatican policy is replete with ambiguities and does not speak in crystal-clear terms on behalf of unconditional victory for the Allies, its position will be employed by the fascists—particularly Franco—as an implicit justification to save mankind from the bogey of Bolshevism by slaughter and pillage.

Welcome, President Barclay

THE Bourbon bloc didn't like it: but the rest of America did. When President Barclay of Liberia became the first Negro to address the Senate and House of Representatives he typified one of the goals of this war—the unison of white and Negro. The Negro president was escorted to the Senate floor by Sens. Lister Hill of Alabama, Charles W. McNary of Oregon, Robert Wagner of New York, and Arthur Capper of Kansas. The significance of this event was reflected in the statement of Charles Collins, co-chairman of the Negro Labor Victory Committee, who said: "President Roosevelt's invitation to President Barclay of Liberia was a slap in the face to all the Hitler racialists abroad and at home."

President Barclay, speaking later to an assemblage of Negro and white newspapermen in historic Blair House, official guest residence for distinguished visitors to this country, told of Liberia's contributions to the common cause. His country, he said, "as a matter of choice is dedicated to cooperate with and to render all assistance within her power to those states now engaged in a terrific struggle to banish terrorism and authoritarianism from the world." His words impressed all but Fred Pasley of the New York *Daily News*, who reflected "Hitler racialism" in his more-than-boorish questions on the eating habits of the Liberian people. A number of poll-tax congressmen, including the notorious Rep. John Rankin of Mississippi, heard the Liberian president, and were significantly silent. They undoubtedly understood the full connotation of the event.

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Ten-tenths Will Win

JIM CROW is a mean customer; when Negro workingmen were assigned tasks next to whites in the Mobile shipyards, he went on a rampage. Result: eight men injured, and 7,000 Negroes ordered off their jobs throughout the city. "It was a great day for Hitler and the Mikado," Charles Hanson, CIO union leader there, said. It was indeed; it happened the very day the House passed the anti-poll tax bill, one of the most significant domestic developments since Pearl Harbor. The fact that skilled white and Negro workers labored together to produce the stuff for victory is an earmark of the advances the war has brought. These developments are poison to the southern "secessionists," who would rather see Hitler win than Jim Crow licked. Hence, their inducement of an atmosphere which could produce an outburst such as that in Mobile.

It is of a piece with the sort of business in which Food Administrator Chester Davis is indulging. His importation of Negro workers from Jamaica on terms all too similar to the old slave trade is a major scandal. Some 4,000 were herded on a ship built to carry 1,700 passengers. After two days at sea, food gave out. In the inevitable protests that followed, two men went overboard, one was drowned. Those arriving here work under lamentable conditions; five strikes broke out in Florida when wages were cut. Why Mr. Davis found it necessary to import these farm laborers here is questioned by the CIO's United Cannery, Agricultural and Packing Workers. Donald Henderson, president of that union, indicts the importation with his statement that there is "no real shortage of farm labor." The problem is conversion from non-essential crops and the utilization of the labor supply thus released. But Chester Davis is operating along lines mapped out by the "farm bloc"; he has failed in one of his most important tasks: the full mobilization of manpower for the efficient production of food.

Millions of Americans are aware of these lags in our war program, and they clamor for their correction. After all, total war means just that; it means the need to use ten-tenths of our powers to win—not the disbarment of that one-tenth which is our Negro citizenry. The Negro Freedom Rally at Madison Square Garden, June 7, will highlight these factors and press for the fullest realization of win-the-war policies which will embrace the totality of our people, not merely those of white skins.

These Are Labor's Enemies

JOHN L. LEWIS' sabotage of the anti-fascist war made itself felt in the unauthorized strikes that swept the Chrysler plant and spread to the rubber mills of Akron. (At this moment of going to press, news comes that the coal miners have stopped work.) It does not diminish Lewis' responsibility for the serious harm done the war effort and national morale to recognize his collaborators in this violation of labor's no-strike pledge—such figures as David Dubinsky, Walter Reuther, Norman Thomas, and assorted Trotskyite and appeaser groups. Nor should the deliberate provocations of certain defeatist employers remain unrecognized; they also undermine the war by using the national emergency as an excuse to pile up super-profits at the expense of an all-out effort against the Axis, and by raising a smoke-screen of spurious "patriotism" to cover their constant vendetta against the unions.

No doubt the Akron rubber workers had a legitimate complaint against the War Labor Board's decision to revise downward by five cents a panel recommendation for an eight-cent wage rise. But to strike against the war at the moment the United Nations gird themselves for new offensives only plays into the hands of labor's main enemy and loses sight of the central issue: the imperative need to defeat the Axis at whatever cost. The issue is a United Nations' victory or defeat—and defeat would doom the unions to complete destruction and America to slavery.

This does not imply that labor is forced to submit supinely to any abuse and to accept whatever happens without demur. The rubber workers have recourse to appeal against the WLB decision. But when Lewis' Akron agents and Trotskyite racketeers who have long plagued the rubber union are able to foment strikes, they sell a "cure" equivalent to urging labor to hit itself over the head to relieve a headache. Lewis pretends that the WLB is the main enemy. He continues to press his plot to destroy the Board—the plot that failed when his abortive coal strike collapsed. If Lewis can scuttle the WLB, he expects to wreck all controls against inflation. That is the quickest way to "win" the war for Lewis' friends like Herbert Hoover and Sen. Robert Taft, who have given him to understand that if he can deliver to them a smashed labor movement, they can contribute a wrecked administration and a negotiated peace.

The War Labor Board has so far been handicapped in fighting Lewis because the President's program for economic stabilization has gone largely unenforced. The Board is left to hold the line on only one front—as it attempted to do in its decision on rubber workers' wages, and as the National Railway Labor Panel also attempted when it granted railroad workers an eight cents' increase in lieu of the twenty cents the Brotherhoods rightfully demanded. At the moment, the Office of Price Administration fights for its life before a united reactionary onslaught. But past reluctance on the part of OPA officials to enforce price ceilings, to roll back prices to levels of September 1942 while wages are held stationary, has obviously placed an unequal and dangerous hardship on the labor movement. Lewis exploits this lack of proportion. Congress too shares the responsibility for disruption—it passed an indefensible tax program authorizing a colossal raid of the Treasury by the rich, it refuses to limit large incomes, it attacks without surcease the President and the war effort, it sabotages over-all economic stabilization, it badgers labor at every turn.

The war effort necessitates the preservation of the War Labor Board, as the CIO pointed out at its Cleveland conference. The WLB's coal decision proves that the Board is not anti-labor as Lewis has charged. The decision encouraged collective bargaining processes by suggesting Board approval of a portal-to-portal agreement reached by labor-management negotiations; the WLB made concessions to the miners' justified demands, though it mistakenly dismissed direct wage increases. The unanimous labor dissent to this ruling underlines the poor reasoning of the Board's majority in the face of inadequate price rollbacks. Yet the Board did point to steps that could be of lasting benefit to the coal miners: the six-day week, and portal-to-portal pay already awarded to non-ferrous metals miners by the courts.

Lewis and his allies have been able to force recent strikes only because the President's hold-the-line order has been abused and neglected. Philip Murray emphasized to the CIO executive board, and won wholehearted support, that the main effort of labor—and the answer to Lewis—must be to apply the hold-the-line order not only to wages but to the whole economy.

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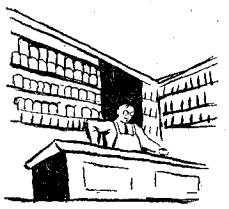
Roll On, Rollback



OPA NEWS these days must be read with mirrors. When representatives of the processors and the chain stores who have been blocking effective price-control resign from the OPA apparatus, the newspapers tell us that OPA is tottering. And when "farm bloc" congressmen and associations of large distributors raise a howl about plans for a rollback in prices, this is described as a popular revolt against OPA. There are lots of things wrong with OPA, but when the brickbats start flying just as at long last it begins moving—not too rapidly—in the right direction, it behooves those who have the headache of stretching the family dollar to rally to the defense of the agency attacked.

During the past week seven officials resigned from the OPA. Who were they? They were such men as Charles H. Fleischer, former A&P executive, and Edward F. Phelps, former sales manager of E. S. Kibbe, Hartford wholesalers. All seven fought the rollback, opposed grade labeling and vigorous price enforcement. In denying sensational rumors concerning mass resignations and a crackup of OPA, Price Administrator Prentiss M. Brown said: "We have some resignations all the time, many of them not altogether undesirable."

OPA has been put on the pan by a half-dozen congressional committees in an effort to nullify plans for using subsidies to processors in order to make possible the rollback of prices to consumers. And wielding a sharp stiletto behind the scenes are a couple of homespun ex-bankers, Secretary of Commerce Jesse Jones, and Chester Davis, head of the War Food Administration. Jones is trying to hold up Reconstruction Finance Corp. funds, $500,000,000 of which are to be available for OPA subsidies. Davis has been working closely with the representatives of the large landowners who call themselves the "farm bloc," now busy trying to block subsidy payments and price rollback.

The decision to roll back prices of meat, butter, and coffee ten percent must be made to stick. But the experience of the OPA under both Leon Henderson and Prentiss Brown has shown that purely administrative measures will not work. The cooperation of the labor movement and of consumers' groups—and this includes their active participation in planning and directing the OPA program—is the best way to assure both the defeat of OPA's enemies and the successful enforcement of price control and rationing.

Belle Calhoun has been named "Miss Negro War Worker" and will be presented with a twenty-five-dollar War Bond at the Negro Freedom Rally on June 7 in Madison Square Garden. Miss Calhoun is shop steward of Local 36, United Wire and Metal Workers Union, CIO, at the Lincoln Wire Co., where she is employed as chief operator. In addition to her job, producing vital war material for the Navy, she is active in the American Women's Voluntary Services, has purchased ten bonds since working at her present job, and spends her spare time in her Victory Garden. Production in her plant is five times greater than a year ago.

"Too Much and Too Soon"

WHEN veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion enter the United States Army, as a great many of them have, they are at once conspicuous as good soldiers. Those who have reached the fighting fronts

have already won awards. Their battle experience, their morale, and their intelligent hatred of fascism make them invaluable anywhere. So it is not surprising that their superiors have sent dozens of them to officers' candidate schools. Nor is it surprising that their school records are excellent.

The surprise comes when the veterans are about to graduate, with the approval and admiration of their instructors. Suddenly, with no explanation, they are informed that they have been dropped from the school. Many of them are not even to rejoin their units; instead they are assigned to labor duty, given latrines to clean, sent to special work camps for "suspected elements" where they are herded together with known Nazis. They ask why; and sometimes the instructors, in indignant sympathy, will tell them, "Orders from Washington. From the War Department."

Others, in combat units about to go overseas, are suddenly yanked out of their regiments and transferred to labor battalions kept over here. All these men are officially informed that they will be barred from overseas duty. Why, yes, their Army records are unimpeachable, but. . . . Orders from the War Department.

In many cases the men's officers have come to bat for them, one even journeying to Washington in vain. These veterans of Spain's anti-fascist war, it seems, are to be barred from ours for what one government official recently called "premature and excessive anti-fascism." In other words, their offense lies in being the opposite of "Too little and too late."

CONGRESSMEN COFFEE, Holifield, and Magnuson have taken up the cases of these men, asking the War Department for an explanation. The answer is a denial that discrimination exists. Undersecretary Patterson writes, "The War Department does not possess a list of the loyalist forces in Spain, and except incidentally does not know and does not concern itself with whether a particular individual has served in those forces." There follows a list of five Lincoln veterans who have been granted commissions; all to the good. It strikes one, however, that in these cases, at least, the War Department appears to have picked up "incidental" knowledge of their history. The reality of five commissioned Lincoln veterans cannot serve to excuse the discrimination against innumerable others.

The three congressmen refuse to be put off by such denials. They have replied with an incisive letter, listing specific cases of discrimination, and asking for a specific investigation of each by the War Department. If the War Department is not responsible, somebody somewhere is. The congressmen have made the correspondence public. This enables the American people to take a hand in support of its anti-fascist heroes. Representatives Coffee, Magnuson, and Holifield must be backed in their protest.

Edsel Ford

EDSEL FORD was a shadow of a legend—his father. There is a core of truth in the legend. Henry Ford was once a great innovator, a genius of mass production. He has outlived that early creativeness and become, as A. B. Magil pointed out in his article from Detroit in our May 25 issue, one of the least efficient producers of war materials in the auto industry. How much Edsel, who at the age of twenty-six became president of the Ford Motor Co., contributed both to the Ford preeminence of the Model T days and to the decline of recent years, no one can say. He was no figurehead, but also no genius, and his father dominated the company at all times.

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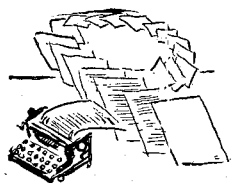
Unlike the elder Ford, Edsel had no flair for publicity. If he ever differed with his father's anti-Semitism, pro-fascist sympathies and anti-unionism, he managed to keep his differences to himself.

Concerning the dead, one is supposed to speak only good. In the case of Edsel Ford, however, some newspapers seem to have confused obituary with the publicity handouts of the Ford Motor Co. The staid New York *Times* pulled out all the stops when it wrote that it was Edsel who "mobilized the engineers and technicians on the Ford staff to concentrate on the development of the conveyor system of mass production of interchangeable-part giant bombers, a technical innovation that not only tipped the scales in favor of the United Nations at a crucial stage of the second world war, but which prepared the way for American leadership in the development of global air-commerce in the postwar period." That's pretty tall. Just how the Ford Willow Run plant, which did not even begin to produce completed bombers till the beginning of this year and which today is producing a mere trickle, could have "tipped the scales in favor of the United Nations" is more than the *Times* can explain.

Comments on Comintern



COMMENT in the American press on the proposed dissolution of the Communist International has been predominantly favorable. In most cases, however, the wrong reasons have been given for a step which the commentators agree was right and necessary. In an article elsewhere in this issue A. Landy, noted Marxist writer, discusses the historic recommendation of the Comintern's leading body in its proper perspective. Here we wish merely to comment on a few of the commentators.

The most intelligent remarks we have read outside the left wing press are those of Freda Kirchwey in the *Nation*. She views the proposed dissolution as having deprived Hitler and the small-bore fuehrers throughout the world like our own Martin Dies of a powerful weapon, even though that weapon was forged out of a lie. Miss Kirchwey feels no doubt that the move will strengthen unity among the anti-Axis powers. She is less certain about internal unity on the left, yet she does not close the door to possible change in this respect too.

The strength of Miss Kirchwey's column lies in the fact that it sticks to the immediate facts, eschews Red-baiting, and refrains from any pontifical attempt to evaluate Marxist theory. It is too bad her good example was not more widely followed. The New York *Times*, after adopting a positive approach for about two-thirds of its editorial, reverted to business-as-usual in the last third with demands for the dissolution of the individual Communist Parties and of the Union of Polish Patriots, which has been formed by Polish refugees in the USSR, and the abandonment by the Yugoslav partisans of their magnificent struggle against the Axis. Hitler could hardly wish for more. Incidentally, shouldn't the *Times* get together with itself and decide what its policy really is regarding the French Communists? While its editorial columns belabor them articles in its Sunday magazine section twice recently singled out as the supreme example of French patriotism the martyred Communist, Gabriel Peri.

AMONG the worst comments on the Comintern proposal were those of three writers from whom one expected something else: Dorothy Thompson, Max Lerner, and Sir Bernard Pares. As we go to press, Miss Thompson's dreary serial on the subject is still unfinished. She is still making an operatic tour of the history of the last twenty-five years, with loud brasses and relentless falsetto. The trouble with Miss Thompson is that she hasn't yet learned that before writing history one ought to read it. When she says that "Trotsky concluded the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany," it is a pity some charitable copy-reader didn't inform her that Trotsky *opposed* the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and had to be overruled by Lenin

As We Go to Press

Because our printer did not work Monday, May 31, Memorial Day—thus necessitating an earlier deadline —we left this box open to register last minute news upon which we will comment next week.

THE new Office of Mobilization is a momentous step toward that centralized planning and direction of our war economy which is proposed in the Tolan-Kilgore-Pepper bill and which NEW MASSES, in common with organized labor, has long advocated. This move was immediately welcomed by the ten Senators who have sponsored the bill and by Representative Tolan. And as one of the sponsors, Senator James E. Murray of Montana, pointed out, the Presidential order "unquestionably lays the basis on the home front for carrying out the great military decisions arrived at during the Churchill-Roosevelt conference."

It is unfortunate that labor is not represented on the new six-man War Mobilization Committee of which James N. Byrnes will be chairman. Nor is there anyone from the War Manpower Commission. Despite these deficiencies, there is reason to hope that the OWM will end the chaos in our war economy and convert the home front into the powerhouse of decisive military action.

ALL Americans who championed total mobilization of the "ten-tenths" of our people—the full inclusion of the Negro twelve millions in the war effort—will be heartened by the President's reorganization of the Committee on Fair Employment Practices. He gave the new body, headed by Msgr. Francis J. Haas, dean of the Catholic University School of Social Sciences, fuller power to end discrimination against race and creed prejudices in employment. The committee, as reconstituted, will be independent and responsible only to the President.

The committee's new powers permit it to consider contracts broken, and withdrawn, wherever discriminatory practices are ascertained and wherever the company refuses to end its discrimination. The President ordered all government agencies concerned with vocational programs for war production to adopt measures ending any discriminatory practices.

IN A LETTER of signal importance to the Reuters correspondent in Moscow and published in part in the New York *Times* of May 29, Premier Stalin notes that the dissolution of the Comintern "puts an end to the lie" that "Moscow allegedly intends to intervene in the life of other nations and 'bolshevize them.'" Stalin's observation is in keeping with statements made by the Soviet government time and again that it seeks no territorial aggrandizement or to impose its political conceptions on any other country. The falsehood to the contrary was a fabrication of the Axis. And Stalin remarks in the same letter that "an end is now being put to the calumny" that "Communist parties in various countries are allegedly acting, not in the interest of their people, but on orders from the outside."

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after the Trotsky policy had permitted the Germans to seize additional territory and hike their demands. When she says that the theory behind the treaty was "that it did not matter whether the Ukraine was under Russian or German control, because the world revolution would wash out nationalism anyhow," she is simply inventing something out of her head; it was never in Lenin's.

Max Lerner in *PM* and Sir Bernard Pares in the New York *Herald Tribune* write nonsense about the Communist Parties, which reveals nothing more than the extent to which the propaganda of Goebbels and Dies has influenced the thinking of men who on other questions maintain rigorous standards of objectivity and accuracy. Lerner does, however, intimate that the possibility now exists for including the American Communist Party in a broad unity of all labor and progressive forces.

In general the commentators work on the assumption that the truth must be far more devious than it is; they therefore are not content with the simple, clearcut statement of the Comintern presidium, but must devise all sorts of subtle theories of their own. Yet all their theorizing leaves them with nothing more original than the very crude and very false notion that the Comintern was simply the instrument of Russian foreign policy and the Communist Parties were Russian outposts which simultaneously were "given orders" and "ignored" by Moscow. The whole history of the movement for scientific socialism, the patriotic contribution of the individual Communist Parties, the connection between the first, second, and third Internationals, the fact that the Communist International was born politically even before the Russian Revolution and organizationally may be traced back to the international conference of Left Socialists at Zimmerwald, Switzerland, in 1915—all this and more is submerged in the vulgar pattern of a "Moscow conspiracy."

As an antidote we suggest Mr. Landy's article on page 11 and the excellent pieces by James Allen in the *Daily Worker*.

LABOR ABROAD by MARTIN T. BROWN

CHINA'S TRADE UNIONS

As a matter of pure theory, the government of China believes that workers should join trade unions. As a matter of actual fact, although the National Mobilization Law adopted a year ago provides for compulsory membership of all general industrial workers in trade unions, official figures announced very recently at the fourth convention of the Chinese Association of Labor indicate that there are now only 422,652 union members throughout Free China—as opposed, for example, to the 550,000 trade unionists in the guerrilla areas of the Northwest and the more than 3,000,000 members reported by the All-China Labor Federation in 1927 shortly before it was dissolved by the Kuomintang.

There is no doubt, as Chinese leaders point out, that China could play a far more effective role in the war if the United States and Britain conceded her spokesmen an equal place in the common war councils and contrived to deliver a few hundred more war planes and a modest amount of light field artillery to the Chinese front. But there is also no doubt that China's war effort would be far more effective if the best Chinese troops were still not concentrated in areas where their main strategic function appears to be to blockade the Eighth Route Army; if energetic economic measures were taken to control the present inflation and prevent profiteering; and, finally, if free and democratic trade unions were allowed to function. When Wendell Willkie visited factories in Chungking last fall, he discovered that unions were almost completely absent in the basic branches of the capital's industry. Foundrymen in a big iron works told him that they had had a strong union in Shanghai, but had not been able to reeestablish it after the plant was evacuated.

US and British experience has proved that strong and democratically controlled unions are both a bulwark against appeasement and a powerful implement for increasing war production, but the exact status of Chinese trade unions in recent years has been uncertain. US labor has contributed several million dollars to Chinese labor. Representatives of the Chinese Association of Labor (CAL) have been in the United States for some time and have given numerous speeches before labor bodies. But there is still little general knowledge of what the CAL is.

A series of articles wirelessed to this country in the last few weeks by Israel Epstein, *Allied Labor News* correspondent in Chungking, has given the first comprehensive picture of the legal framework within which the CAL is obliged to operate. All Chinese unions must register with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Epstein says, and union officials are appointed by the government. The CAL itself was organized under official auspices in 1938, shortly after a "Program of Armed Resistance and National Reconstruction" was adopted by the Kuomintang and the Communists, providing for the formation and strengthening of labor unions as part of a joint program for resistance to Japan. The 1942 National Mobilization Law provided, however, that "the government may prevent and settle industrial conflicts by decree." Last October the Ministry of Social Welfare—which before 1939 was known as the Department of Social Affairs of the Kuomintang—called a conference of government officials to map out a new national labor policy. This provided in general that workers should have the right to organize, bargain collectively, and strike, with the following important exceptions: workers in military industry could not organize at all, workers in government-owned enterprises could not bargain or strike (more than half of Chinese industry is now government-owned), and workers in privately owned public utilities could bargain but not strike.

A set of wartime regulations, adopted at the same time, abolished the right to strike of all these classes of workers for the extent of the war and instructed "competent authorities" to appoint "qualified persons to be secretaries of the labor unions." The duties of these officials, as outlined in a report to the CAL convention, include "assistance to the government in stabilization and labor conscription, promotion of labor welfare and increased production." With the "permission of the competent authorities," Chinese unions were also authorized to establish "an organization in order to participate in the international labor movement." This organization is the CAL. The CAL convention received greetings from William Green and Philip Murray in the United States, and cordial greetings last May Day were sent from Chu Hsueh-fan, CAL president, to trade unions in the United States, England, and the Soviet Union.

The current official Chinese attitude toward unions is indicated by regulations

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adopted recently freezing Chinese workers in their jobs. According to the summary of the regulations issued by the Chinese Ministry of Information, "workers are not allowed to leave their factories or mines unless dismissed by their employers, while the employers cannot dismiss any workers unless the latter have violated the regulations enacted under the present law. . . . Workers may be discharged if they are not capable of handling their jobs, or if they seriously violate the rules and regulations of the plant." As the *Allied Labor News* correspondent observes, this summary "contains no mention of unions. Both the workers and the employer are apparently treated as individuals in their relations with each other and with the authorities."

"SIN HUA JIH PAO," Communist Party organ in Chungking, said in an important May Day editorial that Chinese labor now faces three special problems: (1) the fact that prices of essential goods are rising more rapidly than wages; (2) the problem of raising the educational level of the workers; and (3) the need for organization of workers into their own unions. The Ministry of Social Welfare and other government agencies were urged by the paper to deal with these problems. Chinese workers, said the editorial, have contributed to the cause of Chinese resistance with complete self-sacrifice. They made possible the evacuation of large sections of Chinese industry from the coast during the early days of the war. They are working unceasingly to develop new industries in the interior. The editorial concluded with a description of what workers are doing for the war in the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union, with special emphasis on the part played by the powerful democratic trade union movements.

American labor in particular has commanded great prestige in China since the strikes called by the San Francisco longshoremen during 1937 and 1938 against the shipment of US scrap iron to Japan. Last month Mme. Chiang Kai-shek addressed the longshoremen as "fellow workers" when she attended a membership meeting of Local 10 of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union in the CIO hall in San Francisco. The influence of American labor, if brought to bear, could enormously strengthen the position of those in China who support the extension of trade union rights.

The weakness of Chinese trade unions and their relative ineffectiveness in the war against Japan is thus another argument to add to the many in favor of international trade union unity.

WATCH ON THE POTOMAC by BRUCE MINTON

WAR MENU

Washington.

THE press and those government spokesmen charged with responsibility for this nation's food-for-victory program have gone to some pains to dismiss or minimize or ignore the statement by A. D. Krutikov, chairman of the Soviet delegation, to the international food conference at Hot Springs, Va. Yet the contents of that brief memorandum served to highlight the very alarming food crisis developing in this country and throughout the United Nations. As Mr. Krutikov pointed out, it is necessary now to "emphasize the need for coordinated measures against the probable speculation on postwar needs of the European countries which have been affected by the war and the German occupation." Vague discussions and still vaguer agreements looking toward plans to be made sometime in the distant future to cope with a possible and guessed-at situation only postpone action now. Such discussions create the illusion that all will come out right in the end, and provide an excuse for neglecting pressing problems of the war.

The Soviet delegation warned that the "Soviet Union needs food to supply the large army which it maintains in order to defeat Hitlerite Germany and to win the war, and secondly, because food is required to maintain the life and health of the looted and impoverished population of the regions which are being liberated by the Red Army from German invaders." In the light of such facts, all plans that do not look to speedy correction of present shortages become visionary, and worse, condone procrastination seriously endangering the war itself.

The food conference was called because international agricultural production is in crisis. Had the delegates been satisfied to sit around in Hot Springs talking about the hazy future, the get-together would have been charming and meaningless. But the Soviet, and to some extent, the British, delegations balked; what they had to say reflected the thinking of smaller nations not willing to speak out so bluntly.

UP TO now, the international food problem has been the exclusive property of the Combined Food Board set up in June 1942 to regulate the "fair sharing of food supplies available to the United Nations." The Combined Food Board was restricted to Anglo-American membership. Theoretically, the Board knew all, saw all, heard all, and decided all policies. Supposedly, it determined how to handle United Nations requests for the allocation of food. In practice, however, the Board had only the faintest knowledge of food resources throughout the world, or of international needs. It lacked power to allocate food or to press Chester Davis' Food Administration into responding to the need for converting agricultural production to the requirements of war, or to obtain the realignment and adjustment of distribution methods as United Nations' needs shifted. Moreover, the Board could not possibly exercise authority over internal planning within the United Nations. Theoretically in charge of allocations, it was in effect reduced to granting demands for food made by the army and navy, to bowing to pressure from politicians at home for what they called "domestic needs," and to allowing whatever food happened to be left over, if any, to be distributed by lend-lease. This was not strategy or planning but rather a hit-or-miss program without direction or intelligence. The Board could not insist on conversion, nor could it utilize available supplies to the greatest benefit of the all-out prosecution of the war.

The steps that must be taken to correct these inadequacies are obvious enough, if not so simple to achieve. The Board must of course be representative of all the United Nations, which will enable it to amass accurate information on international requirements and resources—a precondition to a meaningful production program. It must have the authority to enforce this program through an adequate revolving fund. It must, among other things, have the power to enter into advance contracts, thereby guaranteeing producers an outlet for their harvest. It must be empowered to make

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"First the Anti-Comintern is threatened and now the poll tax may go—and you just sit there, doing nothing!"

price agreements, thereby stabilizing the market and assuring the producer a reasonable return.

Such a program remains out of the question unless the internal agricultural processes in each nation are subject to control. The great stumbling block in the United States is the combined forces of the farm bloc and the defeatists. They have successfully opposed conversion and any real intensification of farm production. The farm bloc coalition, motivated by selfish interests, by the lust for super-profits, by an unwillingness to endanger "postwar positions" (which means clinging to pre-war relationships), fights any step toward conversion, and insists on the continuance of crops not essential to the war. The disrupters and appeasers, sabotaging the war, assault price stabilization and rationing, disrupt the economy, refuse to expand food production, and seek to hold on to their dominating position in relation to the nation's food supply. If they succeed in their plans, they know that food shortages will result by this coming winter—and they expect the ensuing hardship to take the people's minds off the war, to enhance discontent and dampen morale.

To be sure, Secretary of Agriculture Wickard advanced a program of food expansion which, despite hesitation and vacillations, pointed in the right direction. But the farm bloc and its allies scuttled food-for-victory plans by transferring production authority to Chester Davis. So far Davis' contribution has been to urge reduction of the number of hogs to be raised this year, to advocate slowing the production of chickens, to weaken the Farm Security Administration, increase the price of feed (affecting adversely all livestock production), and approve a program to triple the manufacture of farm machinery, at a time when ample farm machinery exists but is not fully utilized. Present schedules endorsed by Davis calls for 1,000,000 tons of steel for farm machinery in 1943 while a shortage of steel forces sharp reduction of orders for war materiel.

FOOD is an immensely important war weapon. Food shortages impair the health and effectiveness of those who produce and operate planes and tanks, ships, and guns. The Soviet statement was based on an understanding of this vital fact. Today the United Nations have sufficient food *resources*—but not enough food. Nor can the time element be disregarded in any discussion of food production. Policies made now will determine spring planting schedules in 1944. If planting in 1944 fails to correct lamentable shortcomings of the 1943 plantings, then 1945 can well prove a year of disaster—which must go uncorrected until 1946. A lost opportunity now is a lost opportunity for the following nine months and a tragedy for the ensuing year. The Soviet warning that insufficient food already hampers the ally "bearing on its shoulders the main burden of the war against Hitlerite Germany for almost two years," also serves as a warning that these same shortages soon will menace the United States—and all the other United Nations.

CORRECTION of present disproportions and inadequacies involves the use of subsidies large enough to permit genuine price rollbacks. These subsidies must be applied through every stage of the distributive and productive process—as the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers have pointed out. Nevertheless, subsidies imply *control* of agricultural production and therefore are resisted by those interests devoted to "normal" methods. Still, the machinery already exists to regulate agriculture. The AAA, born of the depression, exercised controls to curtail output; this same machinery could now be used for the opposite purpose of expanding the yield of America's farms. The AAA could readily be the medium for the distribution of incentives to those producers who exceed quotas of essential crops, as well as providing farmers with the financial help necessary to speed conversion. It could encourage larger crops by granting priorities for farm machinery, fertilizer, and farm labor while withholding benefits from those who refuse cooperation, and by reducing prices on inessential products.

Not so long ago American agriculture was plagued by overproduction—with too much farm goods under a profit system. Crops were plowed under and subsidies were paid to those who reduced their yield. In consequence, it is hard now to comprehend the danger of underproduction and even of hunger caused not by lack of purchasing power but by lack of available supplies at any price. But like it or not, this is the reality—with all the menace it implies to the conduct of the war. The food crisis cannot be dismissed or ignored: it becomes a central issue not alone in the rural sections of the country but in the industrial centers and the great cities as well.

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COMINTERN AFTERMATH

Not an "obituary" but a weapon of war, opening new paths to the future. The need to reevaluate wrong attitudes toward American Communists.

THE day on which the Axis was to mark the birth of the Anti-Comintern as a coalition for world conquest came the sensational announcement of the proposed dissolution of the Communist International. It was the day on which Hitler had hoped to register new diplomatic triumphs against the United Nations by following up his Katyn Forest hoax, seized upon so eagerly by the Polish pro-Nazis to disrupt Polish-Soviet relations, with an even more sensational hoax for use by American proponents of negotiated peace to disrupt American-Soviet relations. But May 22 was definitely not Hitler's day. The recommendation to dissolve the Communist International was a triumphant expression of the further strengthening of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition at the very moment when Hitler thought he was going to further weaken it. It was a mighty blow for victory over Hitler; an historic contribution to strengthening and extending the unity of all democratic, anti-fascist forces and especially labor's role in the nation's war for survival.

Despite the usual amount of insipid speculations and misinterpretations as to the meaning of this act, the democratic world got to the heart of it immediately. The general estimate of its significance was correct, and even the great historical perspectives implicit in it were quickly sensed. The London correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor*, for example, reported three days after the dissolution was proposed:

"As more thought is given to the decision of the international Comintern to dissolve itself, the more it is realized here that great political happenings have been set in motion—happenings which may profoundly affect the course of history." (May 25, 1943.)

This points to the crux of the whole matter, which can be muffed only at great cost to the future of mankind. The main thing about the dissolution of the Communist International is the fact that it was carried out as a contribution to the speediest defeat of the Hitlerite bloc and the assurance of friendship between the anti-Hitler nations after the war. This is the essence of the act to which we must hold fast above everything else and from which bold and fruitful conclusions must be drawn by all sections of the anti-Hitler national front.

Of course the dissolution of the International closed a momentous chapter in the history of the world working class movement. But it is not this that defines its essential character. Its significance is not as an obituary closing the doors on the past but as a weapon of war opening new paths to the future. The great historical strength and promise of this act lies in the fact that it facilitates the achievement of an unlimited national upsurge and the mobilization of the entire people for victory at the exact moment when the most decisive blows of the war are to be delivered, creating the conditions thereby for the more effective collaboration and friendship of the anti-Hitler coalition after the war.

It is clear that the anti-fascist camp can ill afford to misunderstand or confuse the character of the contribution represented by the dissolution of the Communist International. It facilitates the achievement of a national upsurge by removing the "menace of communism" as a false issue, by destroying the chief weapon of the Hitlerites, the negotiated peace forces, the foes of unconditional surrender and unconditional victory. It is a contribution to victory because it will help the various sections of the national anti-Hitler camp to free themselves more rapidly from the pernicious influence of the enemy's anti-Communist line and resume the great anti-fascist advance begun in 1935. It is a contribution because it places new and enlarged democratic unity on the order of the day—a unity which, if achieved, will determine the pattern of historical development for generations to come. In a word, it is a major contribution to victory because it facilitates the mobilization of all national forces, including the Communists.

IT WOULD seem that those who hailed this act as a blow against the Hitler coalition would begin to reevaluate their attitude towards the American Communists in the light of these perspectives, and that only the exponents of negotiated peace and the professional anti-Soviet conspirators would attempt to exploit the dissolution of the International as a justification for continuing Hitler's anti-Communist line in the United States. But it appears that there are people in the anti-Hitler camp who persist in confusing the weapons of the enemy with their own weapons. When Hitler's friends clamor for the dissolution of the American Communist Party, it is plain that this is their manner of continuing the fight against anti-Hitler national unity. But when enemies of Hitler, like the New York *Times*, take up this same cry, it represents a lamentable misreading of the meaning of the dissolution of the International which is all the more dangerous because it can only be maintained by Hitlerite arguments.

Of course, if victory should require the suspension of all political parties, the Communists would not hesitate a moment to meet these conditions. But that is obviously a different matter from the clamor for the dissolution of the Communist Party. Surely, the dissolution of the International was not an admission that Hitler was correct in proclaiming that "Communism is a menace"; if that were true, the dissolution would be a victory for Hitler and not a major blow against him, as the *Times* itself has recognized. It was an historic blow against the Axis because it knocked out Hitler's anti-Communist line and showed that Communism is not a menace. There can be no other sense or meaning to this act. Where, then, is the logic in hailing the defeat of the anti-Communist line on a world scale only to assure its perpetuation on a national scale?

Earl Browder's far-sighted letter in the New York *Times* of May 29 showed clearly that the Communists do not hesitate to discuss the question of dissolution—provided it is a question of aiding the war and speeding victory over the Hitlerite bloc, and not a question of promoting the "spectre of Communism" fable, Hitler's secret weapon for defeating the United Nations. Indeed, Browder declared categorically that, although the Communist Party is strongly opposed to any suspension of the right of free political association, should such a decision be made as part of the responsible regulation of our national life for the war, the Party is prepared to submit to such a decision for the sake of victory.

If the call for the dissolution of the Party were concerned solely with victory in the war, this is the test it would go by. But it cannot stand this test, especially since the American Communist Party has been unconditionally aiding the war. The sole object of this demand is to dispose of the Communist movement, and no great imagination is required to understand that the pursuit of this object could only mean making the struggle against Communism, and not the struggle against fascism, the issue before the country. The logic of this leads straight to the victory of the Hitler-Goebbels line; there is no middle road.

THIS is exactly what the New York *Times* does in its editorial reply to Earl Browder's letter and his offer to cooperate in destroying Hitler's anti-Communist fable in the interest of the people's war of na-

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tional liberation. The *Times* declares in effect: The loyalty of the American Communists is not to capitalism but to Communism; hence they are not really American and cannot serve American national interest which is the preservation of capitalism. The national interest of Russia, on the other hand, is the preservation of Communism; hence the only national interests the Communists can serve are those of Russia. It is true the national interests of these two countries make an alliance between them necessary, but the existence of an American Communist Party is not only unnecessary for the maintenance of such an alliance but is actually an obstacle to it.

IF IT is true that the American people must be kept from ever wanting to adopt a Communist social system, then the only sure way is not by denying a body of American citizens the right to advocate its ultimate adoption, but by destroying its power of example in the Soviet Union. The convenient device of declaring Communism a purely Russian national interest and then using this as a pretext for excommunicating all Americans who believe in it can only mean a line of constant suspicion and fear of the Soviet Union backed up by relentless struggle against American labor and the American people whose sympathy for the Communist achievements of the Soviet people is bound to grow. Is it necessary to ask what kind of an alliance we can expect between the United States and Russia under the influence of men who are so fearful of the Soviet Union that they insist on the dissolution of the organization of those Americans who have been the most consistent and sympathetic champions of the ideals which the people of Russia have adopted as the basis of their social and state existence? Under these circumstances, even if there were no other reason for the existence of a Communist Party, the best national interests of our country which demand the closest friendship with the Soviet Union would dictate its creation. Generally, the perspectives opened up by the position of the *Times* are perspectives for a postwar epoch of strife and turbulence rather than of ordered and peaceful reconstruction, of cooperation between all democratic forces in the solution of the great problems before the country and the world.

The trouble with this position is that it operates with false premises and confuses the issues. It is false and foolish on the face of it, in a country of capitalists and workers, of poverty and wealth, of unemployment and crises, to insist that the interests of the capitalists alone represent the interests of the nation. The best interests of a nation are determined by the welfare and progress of its people and not by the maintenance of a social form or system irrespective of whether it serves the interests of the people. To deny labor and the people the right to freely discuss and judge the issues arising out of American social life and form political parties to represent and defend their interests and views even to the point of insisting on a complete change in the form of our social organization is to deny the heart and spirit of American democracy.

THE fact that labor and the people in another part of the world have already decided that the continuation of capitalism is not to their best interest does not make advocates of the same views in the United States the servants of another country's national interests. To admit this principle into American public life is to import the temper and atmosphere of fascism and to surrender the very foundations of democratic progress. But this is exactly what happens when the test of loyalty to national interest is based upon belief in capitalism or Communism. The only result of this is to raise the false issue of capitalism versus Communism in the United States at the very moment when this Hitlerite weapon has suffered its most serious blow in the world at large.

This is no time for timid fears and anxiety for the future of capital. It is a time for confidence in the destiny of our nation and bold and courageous action to fulfill it. Anything short of this is to misread the meaning of history at the moment of its greatest opportunity. The dissolution of the International has shown that the chief concern of the Communists is how to solve the actual task which history poses at the given stage. Can anyone in the anti-Hitler camp afford to do less?

A. LANDY.

ED. NOTE: *This is the first of a series of discussions by various individuals, of the Comintern's proposal. "New Masses" readers are invited to join in this discussion.*

Underground

COMPARATIVELY little is known about Norway's northern province of Finmarken. The population consists of Laps whose main means of subsistence are their herds of reindeer, which provide meat and milk and, most of the time, are the only means of transportation.

The Nazis did not bother Finmarken the first year of occupation. But as the food situation in Germany became worse and reverses on the Eastern Front deprived them of valuable supplies in Russia, the enemy's greedy eyes were attracted to the reindeer herds of northern Norway. In November 1942 the occupation authorities ordered the Lap population to turn over about forty percent of their reindeer. All in all, the Laps possess about 150,000 of these animals—the Nazis wanted 65,000.

The Laps were told to come to the town of Kautokejno in Northern Finland, where a German-Finnish foraging detail would take over the reindeer. But scarcely any of the Laps obeyed, and a second order brought no better results.

General Dietl, commander of the six Alpine divisions in northern Finland, became impatient—it was his army which wanted to use the reindeer for transportation and food. A German-Finnish expeditionary detachment was sent across the Finnish-Norwegian border into Finmarken to force the Laps to surrender their animals. It surprised a few Lap settlements and took away about ninety percent of all the reindeer on the spot. When the Lap's in one settlement resisted, they were beaten up, and one of them shot.

The news of the German-Finnish expeditionary force spread immediately over all Finmarken, and the detachment could not find any reindeer in other settlements; the Laps had driven them into the vast snow covered steppes. However, the Nazis finally managed to find a quisling informer who showed them where a large herd was concealed. The Laps guarding it were arrested, and the animals were taken off by Nazi and Finnish soldiers and Elite Guard men.

But during the night, before they were able to cross the Finnish border, the foraging expedition and its booty were attacked in an extraordinary way. Reindeer with burning torches attached to their horns suddenly dashed out of the darkness and caused a panic in the herd taken by the enemy. The whole herd—several thousand reindeer—broke and fled. Two of the sentries guarding them were later found with ropes around their necks—dead in the snow. Several of the arrested Laps had been able to escape; the rest were shot in reprisal. But since then Finmarken, although the northernmost tip of Norway, is a very hot spot for the Nazi patrols sent to watch over the region.

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DETROIT: MUSCLE-BOUND GIANT

A. B. Magil discusses incentive pay as an advantage both to increased production and to workers. The balance sheet of war output in the crucial automobile industry. Final article in the series.

Detroit.

MY INVESTIGATION of war production in this heart of democracy's arsenal is over and I am ready to draw a balance. But first a few words about the recent flurry of strikes here at several plants of the Chrysler Corp. and at two smaller firms. Between 1,000,000 and 2,000,000 man-hours of production were lost as a result of those strikes. This loss can never be retrieved, for the war doesn't wait. We can't fight with the M-4 tanks that weren't assembled and the army trucks that weren't built because of this strike. And the damage may extend even beyond the plants directly affected. For example the Chrysler De Soto plant—which, incidentally, I had the pleasure of visiting when everybody was working—produces sections of the fuselage for the Martin medium bomber. The loss of three days' work at this plant may have slowed down the assembly of completed bombers at other companies and dislocated schedules all down the line. Who can predict that this curtailment of bomber output, temporary though it was, will not affect military operations in the coming invasion of Europe or in the Pacific or on other fronts?

To call attention to these unpleasant realities is to condemn those irresponsible forces in the United Auto Workers-CIO who are trying to put on bushy eyebrows and seduce labor, which has so much at stake in this war, into gambling with this kind of sabotage. It is also to condemn the Chrysler Corp. and certain other firms, whose patriotism is no better than the Lewis-Hutcheson brand and who think that labor's no-strike pledge relieves them of all responsibility to cooperate with their workers and eliminate frictions that whittle down morale and hamper production.

Most patriotic Americans, including the millions who produce our tanks, planes, guns, and other war materials, are agreed that there can be no compromise with strikes so long as this people's war lasts. It would be well if we learned to be equally uncompromising toward other factors that obstruct and reduce production. The Chrysler strikes got big newspaper headlines. There have been no headlines about other layoffs caused not by disrupters in Detroit but by the failure to plan and organize the uninterrupted flow of materials in Washington. There are no radio announcements to tell us that this failure to integrate our war economy under a single high command is each day causing the loss of more man-hours of production in the auto industry than all the strikes since Pearl Harbor combined. And what is true of auto is true of industry as a whole.

MY INVESTIGATION of what is happening in this area of the largest concentration of war industry in the world has brought me into contact with the men and women who know the story from the inside. I have spoken to leading representatives of management—men like H. L. Weckler, vice-president and general manager of the Chrysler Corp., George T. Christopher, president of the Packard Motor Car Co., and George Romney, managing director of the Automotive Council for War Production; to spokesmen for labor such as President R. J. Thomas and Secretary-Treasurer George Addes of the UAW-CIO, as well as officials of various local unions; to officials of key government agencies, among them: H. A. Weissbrodt, deputy regional director and Clarence M. Bolds, regional head of the labor production division of the War Production Board, Montague A. Clark, regional director and Edward L. Cushman, deputy regional director of the War Manpower Commission, Col. George E. Strong, of the Army Air Forces, who is in charge of internal security and industrial relations for Michigan and thirteen other states, G. James Fleming, field examiner and Jack B. Burke, field representative of the President's Fair Employment Practice Committee; to scores of average workers, men and women, Negro and white. I have visited war plants and studied reports that are not for general circulation. And having made a similar though less elaborate investigation on a previous trip to Detroit shortly before Pearl Harbor, I have had some basis for comparison. My general conclusions may be summed up as follows:

1. The auto industry has gone a long way since Pearl Harbor. In 1942, despite conversion difficulties, the value of the war materials it produced was greater than that of civilian goods in 1941. It is now producing at a rate of nearly $8,000,000,000 annually. This is almost twice the highest peacetime output.

2. But this rate is not even half of the industry's potential. The auto companies control about thirty percent of the durable metal goods capacity of the country. On that basis they should be turning out more than $21,000,000,000 of the $90,000,000,000 arms program for 1943.

3. The industry itself has set a considerably lower figure, $12,000,000,000 a year, as its production peak, to be achieved early in 1944. That may be the maximum that is possible with present production methods. With improved methods, however, there is no doubt that this figure can be exceeded. The Packard company has shown what can be done where there is a genuine desire on the part of management to produce to the limit and hence a readiness to cooperate with the union in harnessing the enthusiasm and ingenuity of the workers to the common task. General Motors, Chrysler and Ford—especially the latter two—might well learn from Packard and from such relatively small companies as Murray Body and Continental Motors, which are doing a better war job than the giants of mass production.

4. At best, however, there are definite limits to what the companies and the industry by their own efforts alone can do. The auto industry, with its materials shortages and its manpower hoarding, its superfluous new factories side by side with inadequately utilized old ones, its failure to operate twenty-four hours a day, its uncertain schedules, is a prime example of the crisis in our war production. This crisis is cumulative; it has expressed itself in many ways, not the least of them being our failure to reach in 1942 the announced goals in planes, tanks, and anti-aircraft guns, followed by the scaling down of the goals for 1943. My investigation of the situation in Detroit has strengthened my conviction that the incubus which now weighs down our production can be lifted only by the establishment of an Office of War Mobilization, as proposed in the Tolan-Kilgore-Pepper bill, to plan and

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coordinate under central direction and with full participation of labor the various factors in our war economy. [This article was already in type when President Roosevelt announced the creation of an Office of War Mobilization.—The Editors.]

In my previous articles I have already discussed in detail my first two conclusions, as well as the record of the Packard company. Here I shall confine myself to elaborating the last two.

How can the auto industry, even within the uncertain framework of the present jerry-built system, substantially expand production? What it can do may be divided into two categories: measures involving better utilization of plants and machines, and those involving better utilization of the labor force. The first category includes primarily the pooling of facilities and more complete conversion of machinery and plant space. Pooling was supposed to have been an integral part of the process of converting to war production. In actual practice competitive peacetime methods have prevailed and there has been very little pooling in the auto industry. Take, for example, the production of medium tanks. Even before Pearl Harbor the UAW-CIO urged that General Motors, Chrysler, and Ford, each of which had received contracts for these tanks, pool their tank-building facilities. The proposal was ignored. As a result, the M-3 and M-4 (General Grant and General Sherman) tank has been built at three different plants (in the case of GM and Chrysler they are new factories, constructed at government expense), none of which has operated at full capacity. Even more absurd is the fact that each company has built its own special type of tank engine, requiring its own set of spare parts which cannot be used for the others. Imagine the bottleneck this can create on the battlefield. When the UAW proposed that the Ford motor be adopted as the standard and its production concentrated at the Ford plant, a War Department official turned thumbs down. He is a former GM official.

Though conversion is no longer a major problem in the auto industry and about eighty-five percent of the peacetime facilities are now doing war work, there are still many convertible machines and acres of floor space standing around waiting for the war to end. The Chrysler Corp. is probably the worst offender in this respect.

Of the measures involving the labor force the greatest potentialities lie in two directions: extension and vitalization of the labor-management production committees and the adoption under proper safeguards of a system of incentive pay. I need add little to what I have already said about the labor-management committees in the auto industry. They have been rather generally established, but very few are *production* committees because the companies insist on confining them to such matters as Red Cross and war bond drives and campaigns against absenteeism, which, though important, are necessarily secondary to the main job. When I asked R. J. Thomas, president of the UAW-CIO, what in his opinion were the principal bottlenecks in the industry's war effort, he named first "the lack of legitimate labor-management production committees." Where such committees have been allowed to deal in even a limited way with production, as at the Packard plant, they have brought tangible results. Another example is the rolling mill at the Ford Rouge plant. For three months after Pearl Harbor, output remained stationary. Then the workers persuaded the management to let them set up a production committee. At once output began to rise and within a short time, though there were fewer men working than in peacetime, production was thirty to thirty-five percent higher. After the third meeting, however, the company dissolved the committee. But the men showed the stuff American workers are made of by declaring their determination to keep up the good work despite the company's hostility.

Central to the problem of expanding production is the question of increasing the productivity of the individual worker. No one knows what the limits of human productivity are; we've probably only scratched the surface. Productivity is partly dependent on the quality of materials and machines and their organization in the manufacturing process, partly on the length of the work week, partly on the skill of the worker, partly on the intensity of labor, partly on psychological intangibles. Since practically all workers in this area are already employed at least forty-eight hours a week, and since the timing on jobs in this mass production industry is on the whole up to standard, the principal way in which productivity can be increased is through the appeal to the psychological intangibles, that is, through incentives, moral and material, that will impel the individual worker to surpass the norm. It is often wrongly claimed that such incentives merely result in an intensification of labor. Under proper conditions the incentive system, as the experience of Britain, the Soviet Union, and many American plants has shown, encourages the worker to study his production problem as a whole and to explore every means of improving his performance.

Incentive pay has become one of the most widely discussed issues among the men and women working in the auto plants. Unfortunately, instead of being approached in the same sober and constructive fashion as in other CIO unions, notably in the United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers, the issue has been wrapped in emotionalism and converted into a factional football. It is only natural that officials of the De Soto local, who recently circulated a letter to other UAW locals attacking incentive pay, should have been among the ringleaders of the recent Chrysler strikes. Vice-President Walter Reuther, if his vote for the decisions of the recent conference of the CIO executive board is to be taken at face value, now will have to face the fact that his stand on the incentive pay issue brings him into alliance with those who oppose and seek to obstruct those decisions. These are the forces who fomented the Chrysler strikes. Will Reuther repudiate them?

A glance at the background of the incentive pay proposal will explain why it has been possible for the ragtag and bobtail of Trotskyites, Socialists, leaders of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists and assorted disrupters to have muddied this issue. Incentive pay systems in American industrial life were traditionally used by employers as devices to speed up, cheat, and divide their workers. During the period that I lived in Detroit prior to the rise of the UAW there was nothing that stirred greater resentment among the auto workers than the operation of the bonus system, which was supposedly a form of incentive pay. The trouble was that after a production standard had been set and the workers had been promised a bonus for all work above it, the standard would be raised. Thus, instead of being rewarded, workers were actually penalized and driven into corrosive rivalry with their fellow-workers.

It ought to be as plain as a pikestaff that once you eliminate the root of the evil, the arbitrary raising of production norms, once you provide effective safeguards adopted by agreement between the management and the union, you have an entirely different kind of incentive pay system which becomes a means of benefiting both the country and the workers. Moreover, the increased pay, since it is directly tied to production, does not conflict with wage stabilization policies and requires no approval by the War Labor Board.

The fact is that at the Packard plant there already exists an incentive system—minus the pay. In a pamphlet issued by Packard Local 190 of the UAW describing the origin of the Packard Work to Win program and the labor-management committee there is the following statement:

"Feeling that there would be better morale in the shop if the men knew that they weren't 'killing the job,' that in working against their past performance in an attempt to outstrip themselves they weren't thereby setting a higher standard for themselves which they couldn't always maintain, the union negotiated an understanding with the company.

"The time on jobs at the inception of the Work to Win program was to remain unchanged. If an operator was able to produce twice as much as formerly, no matter what the reason, so much greater the credit for him. On an off day he could do his

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ordinary production and nothing would be said. The union made certain that no one was going to stand behind a worker, goading him on."

One week after the Packard workers signed the voluntary Work to Win pledge in the battle of production, output rose ten percent. "Some departments boost production regularly ten, twenty, and even forty percent," James Lindahl, recording secretary of the Packard local, told me. What do the workers get out of it? Lapel pins, special merit awards for a few, the moral satisfaction that they're working to beat the Axis. Fine, says Walter Reuther. But suggest, merely hint that instead of all the profits from this extra production going to the company, some of it go to the workers in the form of additional pay, and at once he yells: "Speedup, Bedaux system."

What is true of Packard is to a greater or less degree true of every auto plant: that workers are producing under the greatest incentive of all: love of country. *The only issue is whether a monetary incentive be added to the moral one to stimulate production still further.* The only issue is whether the Packard polishers, for example, whose demand for a six cents an hour increase was rejected by the War Labor Board, shall continue to produce 120 percent and get paid for only 100 percent, or whether they shall be paid in full.

WITHIN the UAW executive board the fight for incentive pay has been led by Secretary-Treasurer Addes and Vice-President Richard Frankensteen. Addes, tall, quiet, efficient, is at thirty-three one of the veterans of the UAW. (A devout Catholic, he has found no conflict between his religious beliefs and progressive trade unionism.) He cited several examples to show how incentive pay would work out in practice. "The incentive system is being introduced into some plants," he said, "and the workers are satisfied. This is not the old incentive system. It results in no reduction of the standard wage and provides for 100 percent payment for the extra production."

As a matter of fact, 121 companies under contract with the UAW, most of them small firms, already have incentive pay. I talked with two local union officials who have had considerable experience with it, Nat Ganley, business agent of Local 155, which covers about 130 small parts and tool and dye shops, and Fred Williams, business agent of Local 208, covering the seven plants of the Bohn Aluminum and Brass Corp. Both said that those of their members who were working under an incentive plan were entirely satisfied and the demand for it was growing. At the Bohn Aluminum company three of the seven plants have incentive pay and it is also being negotiated at a fourth. "Right after Pearl Harbor," Williams said, "the men started boosting production. But later it began to drop off when they realized they were pouring more profits into the company treasury." The adoption of incentive pay in Plant 5 about three months ago raised production thirty-five percent and average wages from twenty-seven to forty-three cents an hour .

Among government officials and in employer circles there is also a growing appreciation of the all-round advantages of such a system. Colonel Strong and George T. Christopher, president of Packard, both told me they favored it. And both expressed the view that any incentive wage plan should be established through the normal process of collective bargaining between management and the union.

I COME now to the final question: the over-all organization of our war economy, which so directly affects production in every industry. The Chrysler tank arsenal recently laid off twenty percent of its workers and there have been other layoffs as a result of the cutback in the production of tanks, guns, and other items. Among the explanations I have heard here are that we have produced too much of this stuff; that we don't have the ships to transport them; and that changing strategic requirements necessitate cutbacks in certain weapons and a great expansion of aircraft.

In January 1942, President Roosevelt announced the following production goals for 1942: 60,000 planes, 45,000 tanks, 20,000 anti-aircraft guns, and 8,000,000 deadweight tons of merchant ships. There were actually produced 49,000 planes, 32,000 tanks and self-propelled artillery, 17,000 anti-aircraft guns, and 8,200,000 deadweight tons of merchant ships. In other words, we fell short of the mark in everything but shipping. How then could we have produced too much as a result of having produced too little? That explanation is straight out of Alice in Wonderland.

What about the alleged lack of shipping to transport the stuff? Lieut. Gen. Brehon D. Somervell, chief of the Army supply services, sank that explanation when he said in a recent speech: "In point of fact, we are still not free from difficulties in providing essential cargo for the shipping which is available to us."

The third explanation and the one I have heard most frequently in Detroit, that the cutbacks were made necessary by the changing strategy of the war, which requires greater emphasis on aircraft, is no more valid. "The sky's the limit on aircraft," a representative of General Motors told me. Is it? That sky seems to have a rather low ceiling. President Roosevelt set 125,000 planes as the goal for 1943. Only recently it was announced that this has been scaled down to less than 100,000. And the other day C. E. Wilson, executive vice-chairman of the WPB, revealed that output in the first quarter was only twenty percent of this reduced goal and in April had fallen short of the 7,000 planes scheduled for that month.

FOR the real explanation let me again cite General Somervell:

"Manifestly, the over-all strategy of the war for both ourselves and our allies must be planned with the availability of materials of war taken into consideration. Strategic guidance indicated that at this time emphasis in production had to be placed on the aircraft, Navy and Maritime Commission programs. As a result, our production program for the ground forces was reduced by twenty-five percent."

In other words, instead of production being adjusted to the needs of over-all strategy, strategy is being adjusted to the shortcomings of production. And since the goals can't be reached or even approached for all the tools of war, the program for the ground forces, that is, tanks, artillery, ammunition, etc., has been reduced twenty-five percent despite the fact that "we are providing our own troops in training this year with only a part of major critical items."

Everything I have seen and learned in Detroit points to the conclusion that this state of affairs was not inevitable. Nor is its continuation inevitable in the future—that future in which the real test of America will come with the invasion of Europe. The CIO and AFL, especially the former, the House Tolan committee and the Senate Truman committee long ago told what was wrong and gave the remedies. My study of the auto industry convinces me that if these plants and the factories of the entire country were operated in respect to production (without affecting ownership or the distribution of profits) as if under a single management; if instead of our war economy being the sum of a multitude of conflicting private interests, the public interest were made paramount in practice as well as theory; if production, manpower supply, and economic stabilization were geared together under a central authority, with management, labor, and government jointly at the controls, the original production goals would be left far behind and we would be supplying all the fronts and all our troops in training with all that they need.

How would such a system work? The details would have to be left to experts, but I think we can get a faint idea if we take a look at General Motors. There you have 112 plants strung all over the

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United States and Canada, belonging to such companies as Chevrolet, Buick, Pontiac, Oldsmobile, Cadillac, Fisher Body, AC Spark Plug, Delco-Remy, etc., but all tied together in the General Motors corporation. I am referring here not to their financial setup, but to their production arrangements. Within this great industrial empire, controlling from ten to thirteen percent of the durable metal goods capacity of the nation, there is over-all planning, there is accurate scheduling of the manufacture of every part and the assembly of many parts into the finished product, there is pooling of facilities, there is complete integration of all the factors in the production process. The Ternstedt plant in Detroit, for example, makes parts for the M-5 light tank built by Cadillac. Provided that the materials are available, there is no danger that Ternstedt will make more parts than Cadillac can use or that Cadillac tank output will be stymied for lack of parts from Ternstedt. Each plant has its own management, but the work of the two is centrally coordinated.

Of course, all this is only partial and imperfect since the "planned economy" of General Motors functions within the unplanned war economy of the country as a whole. Moreover, GM production is hampered by the fact that its more than 300,000 workers are not allowed an active role in the planning and organization of the company's program. Yet even in a limited sense here is a microcosm of centralized planning. This war is too big and too tough to run efficiently in any other way. Detroit, which is capable of such prodigies of production, is a musclebound giant today. It waits for its vast strength to be set free.

A. B. MAGIL.

HOW FRANCE WILL WIN

Fernand Grenier writes on recent developments in the French underground. The significance of the Council of Resistance and the resolution it passed recently.

London (By Cable).

Mr. Grenier, who escaped from France several months ago, is the Communist representative to the Fighting French Committee in London. He was the Communist deputy from the Paris area. Mr. Grenier's article reached us shortly before General de Gaulle arrived in Algiers for his unity conversations with General Giraud.

THE Council of French Resistance now constituted on French soil after one year of negotiations comprises the eight large resistance groups operating in France, also the two French central trade union federations and five political parties, including the Communist and Socialist. These parties and various groups express the will and aspirations of ninety percent of the French population. The creation of that Council is the most important political event which has occurred in France since June 1940. It testifies to the whole world that the French are henceforth united as never before in their history. It constitutes a real national plebiscite in favor of de Gaulle and Fighting France. It solemnly demonstrates that the power of the Vichy traitors is now supported only by German bayonets and by unprecedented police terror. Following the two fundamentals agreed upon—first, to drive out the invader; second, to reestablish the republican institutions—each group or party represented on the Council of Resistance retains its autonomy, its leaders, its newspapers, but coordinates its activity with that of others.

The resolution passed by the Council means: (1) total confidence in the policy defined by General de Gaulle; (2) the Council's wish that the meeting between Giraud and de Gaulle should take place in Algiers; (3) the will of the French people that de Gaulle shall preside over the provisional French government, Giraud taking supreme command of the French armies; (4) that de Gaulle is recognized as the sole chief of French Resistance. That resolution signifies the absolute determination of the people to eliminate from public offices all Vichy leaders and politicians compromised by collaboration with the enemy. It means to debar from exercising power men like Peyrouton, a former Vichy minister of state, and Nogues and Boisson, who dared order Frenchmen to shoot at their British, American, and French brothers in arms, thus committing a crime which French patriots will never forgive. That resolution is a protest against detention in Algerian and Moroccan prisons of a number of patriots incarcerated by Vichy, and a protest against the slowness in reinstating republican institutions. That resolution does not, however, question the points upon which agreement has already been reached between the two generals and trusts de Gaulle to pursue negotiations to a successful conclusion.

THE constitution of a Council of Resistance is not the only important development of recent weeks in France. It is also necessary to mention the development of armed action by *francs-tireurs et partisans francais*. This action is mainly directed against transport which is the weak point of the Nazi war machine. From January to April, patriots destroyed or seriously damaged 290 locomotives and over 2,000 cars. In seventeen cases railroad traffic was stopped for over forty-eight hours; in thirty-one cases, for over twenty-four hours; in seventy-five, for twelve hours. Three large railroad bridges were dynamited. Two particularly remarkable exploits were performed when military trains crowded with German troops were derailed, and *francs-tireurs* attacked the survivors with grenades and tommyguns, not a single Nazi escaping alive. In all districts where there are mountains, numerous bands of young men take to them and undergo military training.

Another important event is that the 211th underground number of *L'Humanite* published, on April 15, the instructions given to the patriots in case of an Allied landing. The Germans plan to intern in concentration camps all males from fifteen to sixty-five. To counter this scheme the resistance organizations recommend: (1) the establishment of constant contact between the heads of resistance groups in each locality; (2) immediately after the Allied landing is announced, to mobilize all members of resistance groups, arm them, and lead them in a fight against the enemy's rear; (3) to paralyze wholly the Nazi war machine in France by starting a general strike; (4) to slay or take prisoner the Vichy armed forces which might attempt to interfere with the patriots' action; (5) to occupy public buildings, especially railroad stations, telephone exchanges, telegraph offices; (6) to throw out of office the Vichy authorities' representatives and replace them by boards of delegates from the resistance groups to manage food supplies and public administration. In Algiers the action of the de Gaullist groups greatly assisted the Allies on the day of landing. The same assistance will be increased a hundredfold tomorrow upon the soil of France.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to hasten the invasion before Germany finds the time to deport all able-bodied Frenchmen beyond the Rhine. Before concluding, I desire to bring before our American friends and Allies a message received from the General Staff of *francs-tireurs et partisans*. Not only do they heroically wage a daily fight under most difficult conditions, but their families are left without the support of the absent wage earners and receive but a very small allowance from the *francs-tireurs* organization. Consequently the General Staff asks for financial assistance from all friends of the French people.

FERNAND GRENIER.

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The two boys listened in silence.

CRIME WAVE

A SHORT STORY BY ALBERT HALPER

Miss Golden and Miss Flannagan were talking in low, excited voices in the hall.

"Why, Helen, I just couldn't believe my eyes," Miss Golden was exclaiming. "When I gave my class an art problem to work out yesterday afternoon I had no idea I'd get such wonderful results. Johnny Tatum's water color of a butcher shop was simply marvelous! You wouldn't think Negro pupils of that age had such an exciting sense of color, would you?"

Miss Flannagan was just as enthusiastic. "I tell you, Jen, I'm just as flabbergasted as you are. Honestly, I didn't expect any results at all, either. It's different with white pupils. Most of them get crayon sets or water colors for Christmas and dabble at home. But I'm sure none of my pupils ever held a crayon or a water color brush in their hands before. And what some of the boys and girls in my class did was simply marvelous, too. I just can't get over it. Sam Hurd's drawing was the best."

"What was his about?" Miss Golden asked eagerly.

"It was a water color of his mother's kitchen; just a sink, one chair, and a wash tub in it, with his mother bending tiredly over the tub. Really, I can't figure how a boy that age could get such feeling into it. Can you?"

During the morning recess the two teachers met again. Instead of standing near the windows overlooking the school playground to watch the children racing about below, they talked in the corridor.

"I've been thinking of it all morning," Miss Golden said to her friend.

"I have, too, Jen. I feel we ought to do something about it."

Miss Flannagan thought awhile. Her forehead was a trifle severe, but she had a warm, human mouth. She had been teaching for eight years.

"There must be some way we can help," she finally said.

"Oh, I'm sure there must be! We can't let all that talent go to waste. The instructions from the office said it was just an experiment and to put the children back to printing letters or drawing houses afterward, but we just *can't* let talent like that go to waste. Can we?" She looked at her friend earnestly and eagerly.

"There must be a way out," Miss Flannagan repeated. Usually, her excitement cooled down after a while, but Miss Golden's intense enthusiasm had prolonged her own fervor.

The corridor bells rang, signalling the end of recess, and once more the two friends separated.

That afternoon, right after lunch hour, a special assembly meeting was held. All the classes were marched to the main hall to listen to an address on air raid drill by a representative of the municipal fire department. Fire Captain O'Flynn spoke in his inexperienced but practical voice about school exits, flying glass, fire hazards, wall thicknesses, and the safety zones in the building. In the middle of his speech he took a piece of paper from his coat pocket, put on his glasses, and delivered the rest of the address reading from his notes.

The entire school, which was solidly Negro, listened attentively. Fourteen hundred colored faces were turned toward the speaker; the eyes of the children were wide open and the little bodies were bent forward. It was the most rapt and attentive audience Captain O'Flynn had addressed during his two months' lecturing to schools. Finally, when he finished his speech and sat down, there was a dead silence. Then Mr. Horley, the principal, rose and cleared his throat. He was thinking of his son, who was serving somewhere overseas with the military forces, and of the strong possibility that the boy he loved so much, might never return.

"We have just heard," he said in a voice that carried to all sections of the assembly hall, "how the enemy plans to bomb our city and our homes and wreak his foul fury on American soil. We know that the barbarians who are our enemies dream to crush us and make us their slaves. But their aspirations and dreams will never turn into reality. Why not? Because we will fight for our freedom. We will fight because this is a free land and we are a free people, and a strong free people like us never will be slaves. The entire student body will now rise and give the oath of allegiance to the American flag."

Obediently, the 1,400 pupils in the hall rose. With right hands placed upon their hearts in the prescribed salute, they said in unison: "I pledge allegiance to the American flag, and to the country for which it stands. One nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

The children, aged six to fifteen, chanted the words together. When they sat down, the principal cleared his throat again and for the next ten minutes, in his ringing voice, spoke of the blessings of a free country and of a free people. He mentioned the heritage of America and, thinking of his

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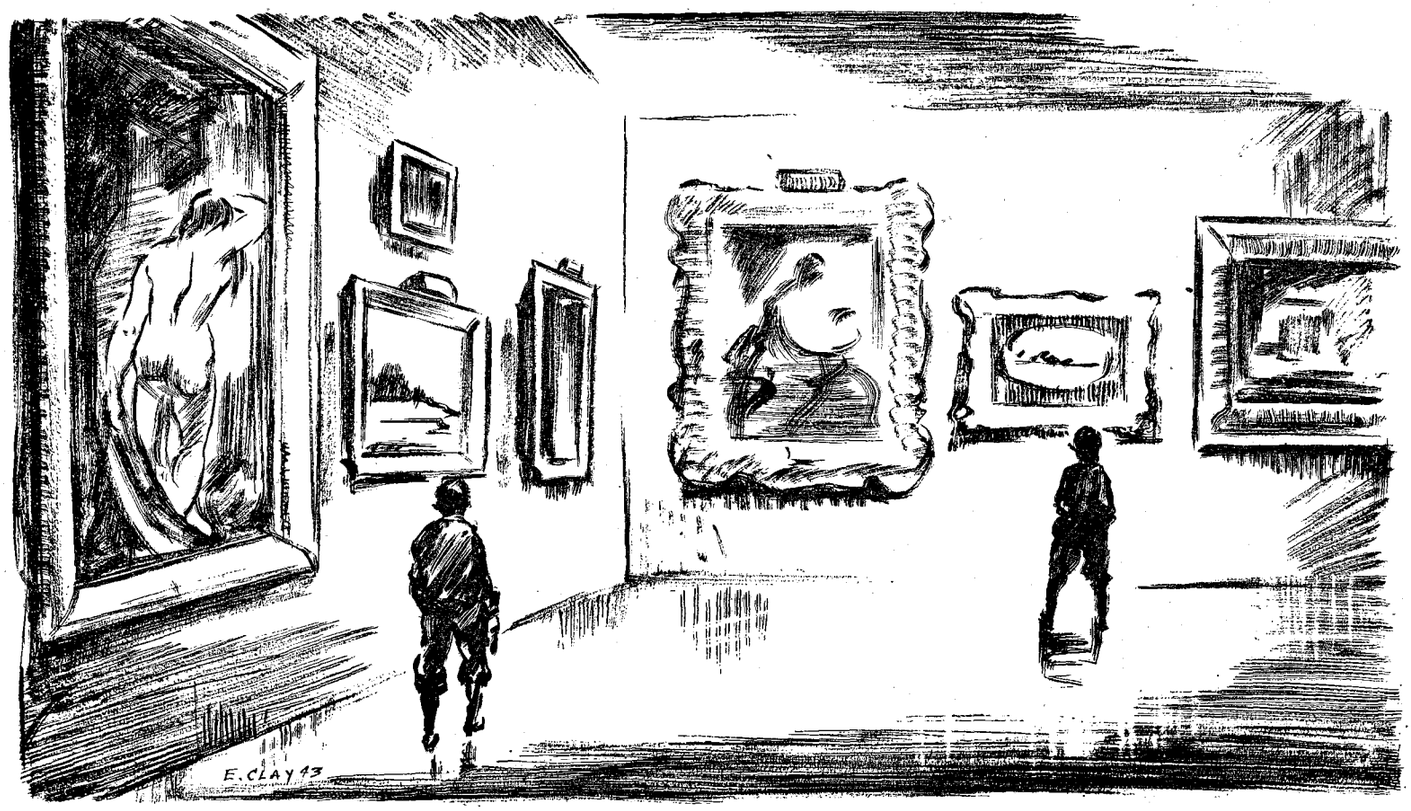

"Think of a guy drawin' all that."

son, his voice grew more vibrant than ever when he spoke of democracy. Toward the end of his speech he looked down almost sternly at the earnest, listening children.

"Why do we believe in democracy?'" he asked.

"We believe in democracy," the pupils chanted, "because it stands for a government of the people, by the people, and for the people."

"Yes, that is so. This is a blessed country." His voiced dropped. "And ours is the best government on earth."

He wiped his brow, then turned toward the third grade teacher who served as the school pianist; she struck the opening chords of "America." Without being told, the children rose and, lifting their faces began to sing, "My country 'tis of thee. . . ." Fire Captain O'Flynn was so moved that his face was damp.

WHEN the song was over the children marched in order from the assembly hall. Their spirits were lifted. The spirits of the teachers were lifted too. "Oh, wasn't it thrilling?" little Miss Golden asked her friend.

Miss Flannagan said, "Yes, it was. And I've got an idea I want to talk over with you during the afternoon recess, Jen."

"What about?"

"Can't tell you now, see you later." Their classes separated on the second landing, Miss Golden's going to the left and Miss Flannagan's to the right.

During the afternoon recess Miss Flannagan got Miss Golden off in a corner down the corridor and said, "I've thought of something, Jen. Something exciting. I happened to think of it when Mr. Horley was speaking to the students during the meeting. Do you want to hear it?"

"Yes!"

"Well, it's this. That mass meeting did something to me. I just can't explain it, but the kids were sitting so attentively, listening to Mr. Horley, that all I thought about was your Johnny Tatum and my Sam Hurd. I said to myself we've just got to do something to encourage them and to show them how we really feel about them."

Listening, little Miss Golden began glowing eagerly again. "Yes, but how, Helen? How?"

"Well, Jen, I thought of this: Let's encourage them by giving them carfare to go by themselves down to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The pictures there will excite and stimulate them and open up a new world for them."

"Why, Helen, I think that's wonderful! Let's give them the carfare to go today!"

"That's what I thought, too!"

"Yes! And instead of a dime, let's give them each a quarter, so that they can eat a bar of candy or something; it'll make them feel as though they're going on an outing!"

Miss Flannagan pursed her lips. Her friend was way ahead of her when it came to excitement. "All right, we can do that." Then the bells rang in the corridors.

An hour and a half later the two teachers kept Johnny Tatum and Sam Hurd after school. "We want to talk to you," they said. The two boys, eleven and thirteen, were terrified. The white teachers were smiling—but you couldn't tell what white people were going to do when they smiled like that.

"Miss Flannagan and I think you two boys are doing very fine work in art class," Miss Golden began eagerly. "In fact, we think your work is exciting."

Then Miss Golden explained their plan. The two boys listened in silence, their eyes still lowered suspiciously. When she had finished Miss Golden asked them a question in her warm voice. "You two boys have never been to an art gallery, have you?"

"No'm," they answered, still looking at the floor.

"Do you want to go to the Metropolitan Museum and look at great works of art this afternoon?"

Johnny Tatum looked at his friend Sam Hurd. "Yes'm," he said in a low voice.

Sam Hurd looked at his shoes. "Yes'm, we do," he answered.

"Then here's twenty-five cents apiece, for carfare and for some candy or something. You'll have to hurry; if you get there by four you can stay there two whole hours before it closes at six. Do you think you can find the Metropolitan by yourselves?"

"We can find it," they said throatily, muffling their excitement before the white teachers.

The two teachers watched from the

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windows as Johnny Tatum and Sam Hurd made their way quickly across the playground toward the subway at 135th Street. They saw the boys hurry past the gymnasium and turn out of sight. The cold February air blew a cloud of dust after them. Then the two teachers, satisfied with themselves, prepared to go home.

THE boys cut east to Seventh Avenue, then turned south toward the subway station, talking excitedly and holding onto their quarters.

"Wonder why they did it?" said Johnny Tatum, wrinkling his brow.

Sam Hurd, tall for his age, two years older than Johnny Tatum, laughed. "Shucks. Teacher just wants us to look at pictures, that's all. Come on, let's duck into this subway."

They changed their quarters into nickels at the cashier's window down in the subway, slipped their coins into the turnstiles, and came out upon the platform. A train of cars was drawing into the station. They hurried and got seats in the last car, sitting excitedly together.

"Gee, this is a break," Johnny Tatum said.

"Sure is," Sam Hurd grinned. "And we'll keep the change. Ain't no need to spend all the money today."

The train roared along the dark tube. Across the aisle two white men were reading the afternoon papers. One of them had his face buried in the sports section; the other was reading the general news. When the second man turned a sheet of his paper, Johnny Tatum and Sam Hurd saw headlines announcing another "mugging" murder of a white man in Harlem. "Crime wave mounts. . . . More police to patrol streets . . . and parks. . . ." The boys sat very still in their seats. As he folded his paper back, getting ready to follow up the account of the "crime wave" on a rear page, the white man looked up from the sheet and glared at them.

They got off at the 86th Street station and began walking east, without speaking. The Metropolitan Museum of Art was on the Fifth Avenue side and they cut through one of the secondary paths which bisected the park. It was cold; they hurried past the bushes, putting their hands in their pockets. Neither wore mittens. Though it was not quite four o'clock, dusk was falling. It grew darker as they approached a grove of trees near the statue of a famous English poet and playwright who stood bareheaded under the February sky.

Suddenly the two boys saw four policemen patrolling an area near an underpass. They stopped in their tracks and, though they had done nothing wrong, they doubled back and took another side path which curved northwest before it cut east again. Two hundred yards on, they saw two more policemen standing near some bushes.

"Let's go home," Johnny whimpered. He was three inches shorter than Sam.

"No, let's go on. What we done? Nothin'. Let's go down this roundabout way near the rocks. I know this part of the park from last summer."

Feeling the weight of his two years' seniority, Sam took the lead. In five minutes, after climbing over some big rock outcroppings, they came into the open where a broad field of withered lawn spread before them. Sam pointed. "There she is! That big white building must be it!"

Excited, they hurried down the long sloping field, toward the building which sprawled ahead in the gloom. When they reached the broad flight of stairs in front of it, after going around the building's flank, they were panting; they had run the last hundred yards without knowing it.

After a few minutes' rest they started slowly up the steps. Their breathing was regular now. Near the doors they stopped, awed by the imposing entrance with its series of windows. Then they went in, removing their pavement-colored caps, and came up to the turnstiles which registered the number of daily visitors. Three middle-aged guards in gray uniforms stood by. The two boys hesitated. Johnny touched Sam's hand. The older boy drew a deep breath and Johnny followed him. They went past the turnstiles. The guards didn't do anything. In fact, the uniformed men were talking to each other.

Passing the turnstiles, the boys found themselves in the huge entrance hall where weekly concerts were given to audiences sometimes numbering 6,000 standees. Heroic sculpture, Egyptian mausoleums, and pillars stood coldly; the museum itself looked like a mausoleum.

The two boys stared at each other. They didn't like it. The coldness bore down on them. Then Johnny saw the inner central flight of stairs which led up to the French, Flemish, and Italian wings.

"Let's go see," he said.

"Sure, let's!"

They ran up the stairs two at a time, turned right and struck the first French and Flemish galleries.

They went from room to room, from wall to wall, staring round-eyed at the pictures. Except for the guards they met few people. The endless walls of paintings, all in expensive frames, well lighted, awed them. They stood before paintings with many figures on the canvases the longest. They visited, farther on, rooms of Egyptian pottery, Roman armor, Greek vases, and collections of cracked pediments. But they always returned to the paintings, shuffling in their thin-soled shoes against the marble floor to re-find the French and Flemish rooms.

"Boy, look at that one with all them soldiers!" said Johnny.

"And this one with all those people swimmin' on the beach!" said Sam. "Lookit that sun!"

"Think of a guy drawin' all that and not making a mistake!"

"Yeah. He mus' be a great artist, sure enough."

"Yeah, he mus'."

A guard came along, smiling. "You boys interested in modern French painting?"

"Yessir," they answered in low voices, respectfully. "Teacher sent us here."

"That's fine. Well, look around. It's all free to look at."

"Yessir," they said respectfully. The guard, smiling, walked on.

They explored a few other rooms after the guard had left them but came back again to the French and Flemish galleries. The more they looked at the paintings the more excited they became. At first they talked to each other at the discovery of each new picture, but after their meager words had gushed forth all they did was stand and gape.

Suddenly the bells high up near the ceiling rang, startling them. It was the five-minute warning. The lights winked off for a fraction of a second, then came on again.

"I guess we gotta go," said Johnny.

"It mus' be closing time. Let's duck out."

"But maybe we can come back sometime."

"Yeah!" Sam scratched his head and grinned. "We ain't seen all of it!"

On the way out they met the same guard again. "How'd you like it, boys?"

Johnny Tatum's face was lit up. "We liked it fine, yessir."

"It's the best painting we ever see," put in Sam excitedly. "And we know why it's free to us, too."

Amused, the guard asked a question. "Why?"

"Because we live in a free country where everybody believes in democracy." The excitement from looking at the paintings had loosened the boys' tongues at last. "Yessir, we learn things like that at school."

The guard looked at the two badly clothed Negro boys. Johnny Tatum wore tennis sneakers and Sam's coat was torn. He looked at their alive eyes.

"You boys have got the right idea," the guard agreed. "Come back any time."

"Yessir," they said together.

The bells rang again, for the last time. About fifteen or twenty people were making their exit from the huge museum. Johnny Tatum and Sam filed out behind a fat middle-aged woman in a mink coat.

WHEN the two boys came out upon the steps it was dark. The lights of Fifth Avenue had been on for some time. Cars were hurrying along. It was colder, too.

The boys went around the left wing of the building and cut into the park, heading for the West Side subway which would

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take them back to Harlem. By the time they had covered 150 yards their hands were freezing and they broke into a run. The park lamps lit up the walks feebly, throwing shadows. The cement path curved before them over a slope. They didn't see anybody. Hurrying along, they hunched their shoulders in the cold.

Then Sam Hurd saw the policemen; there were three of them near one of the drives. The two boys stopped.

"Let's go back," Johnny Tatum whimpered. His eyes were watering in the cold.

Sam Hurd, the leader, thought fast. "No, if we take the East Side subway we'll have to walk more'n a mile. Let's cut back to the trees, then go around 'em." The two boys turned quickly and bore east, then north. When they saw an underpass they avoided it, though they didn't see anybody posted there.

"Here, let's cut through these bushes," Sam said. "They lead out to a drive I know. Then all we gotta do is to follow the drive outa the park. C'mon, let's go."

They ducked into the bushes, Sam leading, spreading the branches with his hands so that his friend wouldn't get scratched in the face. They stooped low in order to evade the thicker, more stubborn branches. Through the bushes they could see the faint light of the arc lamps ahead. Johnny Tatum, following in the rear, began panting.

"I—I'm gettin' tired," he whimpered.

"It ain't far now," Sam urged. "Jus' a few more feet."

Still stooping low, parting bushes, they made their way toward one of the main drives. Branches cracked under their feet. Ahead were the lights, gleaming through the twigs.

Then strong hands gripped them. Johnny Tatum screamed but Sam was petrified.

The two policemen dragged them out on the sidewalk, each officer holding a boy; they were shouting.

"What are you boogies up to?"

"Sneaking in the bushes waitin' to hold up somebody and mug 'im, eh?"

Terrified, feeling the fingers of the law digging into their arms, the two boys struggled to get away. They wriggled in hysterical frenzy. In the silent fracas Sam Hurd accidentally kicked one of the officer's legs.

As the club came down on his shoulder Sam found his voice and screamed.

"Please, mister policeman, I didn't mean it! We ain't done anything! Honest!" He raised his arms, to ward off the next blow. "Please! We ain't done a thing! We just come from the Museum! Honest!"

The other policeman, holding Johnny Tatum firmly, began striking him around the head. Johnny Tatum, screaming, caught most of the blows on his arms.

"We ain't done a thing!" he shrieked. "We just looked at some pictures at the Museum! Honest! We ain't done a—" The club descended again, stunning his left arm.

The club descended again, stunning his left arm.

On the walk the other officer, seeing how young his captive was, had put his club away and was cuffing his victim around the head. The officer holding Johnny Tatume began doing the same. They used their free fists scientifically, rarely missing. As they struck the two boys they continued shouting.

"Crawlin' through the bushes like monkeys for a muggin' party, eh?"

The boys' arms were numb from wrists to elbows, from warding off blows. They kept on screaming while the officers beat them.

"We ain't that kind!" Johnny Tatum screamed. "We don't believe in mugging!"

"You don't, eh?" one of the officers taunted. "What do ya believe in?"

Dodging a blow Sam Hurd sobbed, "We believe in democ—" But a second blow stunned his head before he could finish.

"Sure," screamed Johnny Tatum desperately. "We ain't the bad kind! We believe in de—" A fist smashed against his teeth.

"Now beat it, boogies!" one of the officers said, winded. "We'll let you go this time. But if we catch you again!" The other officer struck Sam Hurd for the last time.

"Yeah, we're lettin' you boogies off easy. But next time! You hear? Just stay outa this white man's park! Stay above 110th Street, you hear?"

"Yeah, you hear?" shouted the first officer. "Stay up above the line and don't cross over! Now beat it!"

The two boys stumbled and ran toward the drive, screaming and sobbing. Sam Hurd's face was bloody, while Johnny Tatum's left cheek had a tremendous bump under the eye. Their clothes were torn, too. They reached the drive, still sobbing.

"What we done?" Sam screamed. "I told 'em I believe in—"

"I told 'em too!" Johnny Tatum cried. "I told 'em too. I said we believe in democ—"

Suddenly the shouts of the officers, who stood under a lamp watching them, reached their ears.

"Go on, keep moving! Faster! Do ya want some more what we give ya?—" The policemen took a few steps forward.

Terrified, the two boys dived through some bushes. They scrambled up, screaming, tearing their clothes against the branches and rushing along the dark ground toward the subway to get farther away from the officers and their clubs.

ALBERT HALPER.

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". . . For Us, the Living"

This is to be spoken
This is to be heard
And acted on: this is a poem
To be said, to be heard, to be done.
A poem: to be accomplished.

Never before has the power leapt through the copper wires,
Never in history have mountain streams
Hurled their unfaltering energy through your hands
So that two hands become fifty looms
Weaving enough cloth in a single day
To make shirts for a county.
Did you know that this has never happened before?

Or take the wings of aluminum: never before
Could the metal rise of itself over the Rockies
So that a man could pick up with his two hands
Ten thousand pounds of food in Omaha, Nebraska,
And set it down in Salem
(Massachusetts or Oregon, it's all the same, you can do it—
But it couldn't be done before.)
The gas explodes in the cylinders
And you can plow ten acres before breakfast;
Steam knocks at the pistons
And you can push a carload of slag up a steep runway.

But this has never happened before in recorded history.

Century after century
The nameless millions toiled and starved and died
Century after century:
It was the way of the world, the primal curse,
God's doing; it was Adam's fault, it was fate.
A few men dreamed of a better life;
But most of the time a woman was drugged with weariness,
Most of the time a man got up from the table hungry.
It was human nature.

Always the dream was a dream: the crystal sphere,
Glittering, filmy as thought, the delicate bubble—
Burst by the shrill derisive laughter of fact.

Because there were no machines
Plato's dream was impossible;
Because there was no steam
Austin's dream was impossible;
Because there was no electricity
More's dream was impossible.

And Aristotle brooding, mocking and mocked,
"If it were possible, the slave-less state,
Materially practicable . . . but you can't change
Human nature. It would be good to live in that land
If it were possible, but you can't change . . ."
And suddenly his mind leaping the centuries:

"If machines
Could move of themselves
As the fable says
The tripods of Hephaestus
Got up and danced about,
If the loom could go on spinning,
If the water-wheel could go on turning,
If . . .

But this is impossible."

For a million years of man that had been true
And for twenty-five centuries more it remained true.

Now it is not true:
The wheel turns. It goes on turning
And the loom goes on with its spinning.
And you can say to the ghost of Aristotle,
"The impossible is a fact."

Power hums in the wires
The tractors lurch through the long afternoons on the prairie
The airplanes dip and soar and settle like gulls.

And all you have dreamed can be done.

You can build a world where no man lies down hungry,
Where no man drops his eyes before his sons
In shame while he makes his illiterate mark;
You can have a bottle of milk for every baby;
You can say to this mountain, "Begone";
You can lasso the sky.

Never again can they tell you, "It is impossible";
Never again can they say, "It's human nature";
Never again can they utter the final blasphemy
Telling you filth and hunger and rickety children
Are the will of God. Never again.

You can change all that the way you have changed the plow.
You can build what you will, now you have harnessed the sun.
You can change the face of the earth:
You can change the world.

ROBERT BRITTAIN.

". . . For Us, the Living" was a runner-up in "New Masses'" Jefferson poetry contest.

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SEVASTOPOL

A Soviet war correspondent, Boris Voyetekhov, tells a story of extraordinary fortitude—the defense of the Crimean stronghold. . . . A soldier's last letter to his wife.

In Stalingrad's darkest hour a Red Army man named Gavril Khasbodin hurriedly got off a letter to his favorite war writer, Ilya Ehrenburg. Gavril had good news. An expert sniper, he had rid a suffering world of 140 Nazis. He wanted to share them with Ehrenburg. "I am crediting seventy to your account," he wrote, "for it was really you who killed them." And the Soviet author gratefully replied: "These seventy dead Germans are the best present I ever received."

Nothing could more clearly define the role of the Soviet war correspondent. He is more than a reporter at the front. He is a warrior, not an observer. His sentences are well aimed bullets. As President Mikhail Kalinin said recently: "Ilya Ehrenburg is engaged in hand-to-hand combat with the Hitlerites. His is a spirited attack; he smites the Germans with whatever comes to hand at the moment; he shoots them with his rifle, and when the ammunition gives out, clubs them with the butt, hitting wherever he can." And this is true not only of the dean of Soviet war correspondents but of all the others as well.

It is noteworthy that the foremost literary figures of the Soviet Union have served as correspondents for *Pravda*, *Izvestia*, or *Red Star*. For the war correspondent is not placed in an isolated literary category. He is the novelist or playwright or poet employing his talent for a specific purpose under specific circumstances. The novelist Eugene Petrov covered the fighting from Murmansk to Sevastopol; the poet Nikolai Tikhonov celebrated the valor of his native city in *Tales of Leningrad;* the poet and playwright Konstantin Simonov wrote first-hand accounts of Stalingrad as well as of the action *On the Petsamo Road;* Mikhail Sholokhov has inspired millions with *The Science of Hate;* Alexander Polyakov, who like Petrov was killed in action, wrote two memorable volumes, *Russians Don't Surrender* and *White Mammoths*. And to these works, all of which are available in this country, one may now add the magnificently stirring and eloquent *The Last Days of Sevastopol,* by the young dramatist Boris Voyetekhov, which was translated and cabled to America by Ralph Parker of the New York *Times* (Knopf, $2.50).

All these volumes are sections of a vast collective enterprise. It is perhaps necessary to explain that the dedication of every major Soviet writer to this enterprise does not mean the abandoning of literary creation for topical reporting. This impression has been circulated by some of the reviewers who appear to believe that when the guns roar the muses are necessarily silent. It is based on two fallacies. The first is that Soviet writers are doing nothing but war correspondence. The second is that the particular character of Soviet war correspondence does not differ essentially from the conventional idea of war reporting.

Actually, of course, the Soviet writer does not face the *alternative* of war correspondence or continuing with his fiction, drama, poetry, and so on. He may do both simultaneously. For instance, Simonov's play *The Russian People* was written at the same time that he was composing a volume of verse and sending his frequent reports to the papers. Alexander Korneichuk's work for the press did not prevent his completing his Stalin-prize play *The Front*. Indeed, as both writers testify, their plays would have been impossible without the daily involvement in the war reflected in their correspondence. The lack of time and quiet was compensated for by intense

experience, quickened understanding, and burning purpose. The indefatigable Ilya Ehrenburg in eighteen months of war had written over 600 articles for the Soviet press, over 300 for the foreign press, and about 100 for Red Army papers published at the front; and at the same time, as I think many critics will have to acknowledge soon, he published one of the really great social novels of our time, *The Fall of Paris*. Moreover, there is considerable flexibility in the Soviet writer's manner of work, as the example of Sholokhov demonstrates. The author of *The Silent Don,* having first given up fiction for correspondence, has now turned to a war novel which will unquestionably be all the greater for his experience at the fronts as a correspondent.

The second fallacy involves a misunderstanding of what the Russians mean by war correspondence. The Soviet reader expects the creative writer to apply his special skills and insights to the job of reporting the war. The external facts he can read in communiques as well as in military and political analyses. What he expects, above all, from a Sholokhov or Alexei Tolstoy, is people. He wants the meaning of the war in human terms. The great drama of his life, the grandeur of Soviet heroism, the abysmal degradation of Hitlerite bestiality, the pity, terror, hate, and hope of the war, its epic sweep and its individual tragedy, its fateful meaning for the life of his nation and of all other peoples—all these the Soviet reader, whether he builds a tank or mans one, wishes to see recorded. The war correspondent is aware of his responsibility as the articulate expression of his people. And to fulfill this responsibility he must command all the resources of truthful and imaginative language that the reader looks for in his plays and novels.

Unless one understands this one can scarcely account for such a book as *The Last Days of Sevastopol*. This is war correspondence; it is at the same time a work of art. It cannot be "dated" by later events any more than Tolstoy's sketches of Sevastopol in 1854 and 1855. Like Tolstoy, Voyetekhov witnessed the heroism of the Crimean stronghold under siege, and like the great novelist he has portrayed this heroism in terms that cut beneath the surface to the permanent truth of the event.

It is interesting to compare the two treatments of Sevastopol. Separated by

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almost a century, they have much in common. What impresses both writers most is, in Tolstoy's words, "a joyous conviction of the strength of the Russian people." This conviction is gained, said Tolstoy, "not by looking at all those traverses, breastworks, cunningly interlaced trenches, mines, cannon, one after another, of which you could make nothing; but from the eyes, words, and actions—in short from seeing what is called the 'spirit'—of the defenders of Sevastopol." In Voyetekhov the traverses and breastworks have become underground fortresses and factories. Dive bombers and tanks appear on the scene. But the story is still of the people and "happenings which surpassed in valour, bravery, and endurance anything my imagination could picture."

But there is an interesting contrast here too. Tolstoy's Sevastopol defenders were soldiers; the civilians showed no particular enthusiasm or determination; the townspeople were "ordinary people quietly occupied with ordinary activities." In Voyetekhov's Sevastopol all the people are defenders, the old and the very young, the women as well as the men. In the long dark tunnels one sees a cook and a typesetter working side by side, the one peeling potatoes, the other composing the front of a newspaper. Painters are finishing sketches made at the front. The machines work twenty-four hours a day turning out the mines. "Before me was an elderly woman," the author reports, "turning the handle of a stamping machine. She had no right hand. It had been torn away by a bomb blast. After leaving the hospital she refused to go from Sevastopol to her native town. She was the best Stakhonovite of the works and all were proud of her. Beside her was a beautiful young woman with a nursing baby at her breast. . . . At night the mother took him into the fresh air for a while. He got excited and cried. 'It doesn't matter, dearest,' his mother soothed him. 'Lie still. They will come and fly away again'—talking of bombers as if they were birds."

TOLSTOY had written of Sevastopol: "You will see ghastly sights that will rend your soul; you will see war not with its orderly beautiful and brilliant ranks, its music and beating drums, its waving banners, its generals on prancing horses, but war in its real aspect of blood, suffering, and death. . . ." Voyetekhov has an equally stern conception of war realism. "Especially since Sevastopol," he writes, "I do not believe people who say you can get used to war. Yes, you can become passive or indifferent through fatigue in a single engagement, but to a daily round of battle, never. The men before me now were not braggartly poseurs briskly mouthing loud slogans and oaths, but just the opposite. These men, who were stirred to the depths of their souls by the urgency of the situation and were growing pale and tight-lipped, had their eyes fixed on the enemy as keenly and anxiously as in their first experience of battle." In Voyetekhov, as in his Soviet colleagues, one feels a great pride in military achievement, but at the same time a hatred for war as such; he is firm, toughminded, eager to get at the enemy, at the same time that he expresses a very gentle, warm, compassionate sympathy for human beings who suffer the horrors of battle. And it is in the subtle interplay of these factors that much of the drama resides. In the most profound sense this is *anti*-war literature, just as our fight against the Axis, being a fight for the survival of free and peaceful nations, is a fight *against* war.

THIS suggests a final contrast between Tolstoy and the Soviet writer. In his second and third sketches of Sevastopol, it will be recalled, Tolstoy became increasingly disillusioned with the war, even if not with the valor of Sevastopol's defenders. The czarist censor cut out many passages in which Tolstoy criticized the undemocratic features of military organization at the front. "Discipline and the subordination that goes with it," he wrote, "like every legalized relationship, is pleasant only when it rests on a mutual consciousness of its necessity, and of a superiority in experience, military worth, or simply on a moral superiority recognized by the inferior. But if the discipline is founded on arbitrary or pecuniary considerations, as is often the case among us, it always turns into pretentiousness on the one side and into suppressed envy and irritation on the other, and instead of a useful influence uniting the mass into one whole it produces a quite opposite effect." Tolstoy is conscious of the vanity and ambition of commanders whose rank was based on wealth or social position rather than ability. A dimension of doubt appears in his sketches.

The Soviet defenders of Sevastopol defend not merely a city but a way of life that has given each of them dignity because it has measured each of them in terms of his personal worth. These people that Voyetekhov so glowingly portrays understand; they know "that their Ural and Siberian lands without the Caucasus and Crimea were too narrow for the Russian people and all who with them were building socialism." The enemy is not as in Tolstoy's Sevastopol sketches a fairly vague entity, simply another military power; it is a Hitlerite army whose hateful meaning has been burned into the consciousness of the defenders. It is such consciousness that gives rise to one of the most inspiring statements in world literature. It is the letter which a second rank captain asked Voyetekhov to mail to his wife in Moscow. The Crimean fortress could no longer be held; the last survivors were being evacuated:

"Yes, Anka [the letter reads in part], we shall not see each other. An hour ago I was called and told: 'We trust you to die

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here. You will do this job and you will not get back alive. We are not trying to frighten you, but don't deceive yourself. The wounded are being withdrawn to Chersonese. Cover them—until the last man, the last yard, the last breath. Some one of us will be with you. Whom we shall decide now. You may refuse. We shall not shoot you. You have behaved here very well.' I was deadly silent. I wanted to refuse, but I could not. Suddenly, just as before the attack, my thoughts became disturbed, and for the first time I began to consider what was going to happen to me, and how. But, however hard I thought, it did not help me to find the place and hour of my death or to recognize the hand of my executioner. That meant I was healthy. That was a wise man who said: 'ignorance is the best drug before dying.' But I know, and I am going. I am not a hero and you know it, Anka. Death never stood very close to me before. I was promised life. Why and for what reason am I doing this? And while waiting for my regiment and looking into my seething mind I find the answer. Here in this war the most splendid deeds are done not only because men are great in spirit but because they have learned to obey automatically, and that is a great force. From discipline to heroism is only one step. And if we talk about our idea of a fighter, first of all we have got to consider him as one who fulfills orders. One who understands that he is being true to the principles of our country. Damn it, we can't even die without philosophizing. When I said: 'Yes, General,' this former officer in the czar's army came to me and, patting me on the shoulder, said: 'We didn't order you because in these times it is important that a man should order himself. There are Germans who go to their death as consciously as you. There are! And they do it quite well, sometimes better than we. But that is not heroism, just gangster pride. Your deed is heroic because you will die in the defense of your soil while they die trying to conquer territory. I congratulate you. I know that you will do this job. Take my medal. Old medals suit youngsters. . . .'

". . . and when a new Sevastopol is built, come here, and somewhere on Chersonese, somewhere near the sea, plant poppies. They grow here very well. And that will be my grave. It may be that you will make a mistake. Maybe it won't be me but another who lies there. It doesn't matter. Someone else will think of her own and plant flowers above me. Nobody will be left out, for we shall lie close and there will be no space to spare where we lie.

"Farewell. I am glad they warned me about death. Otherwise I would not have talked to you—my joy, my blood, my life—I shall gnaw their throats for you. I love you. I love you till the last drop of my blood. . . ."

There is nothing one can add to that—it says everything.

Provocative Study

THE THEORY OF CAPITALIST DEVELOPMENT, *by Paul M. Sweezy. Oxford University Press. $4.*

"THE THEORY OF CAPITALIST DEVELOPMENT" is a contribution to the English language literature dealing with Marxian political economy. Professor Sweezy seeks to present in concise form Marx' historic analysis of value and surplus value, his original categories of constant and variable capital, his concept of the organic composition of capital, as well as various other elements of Marxian economic theory. The book also discusses the views of such men as Eduard Bernstein, Tugan-Baranowsky, Conrad Schmidt, Henryk Grossman, and Louis B. Boudin. And in the last third of his volume Professor Sweezy deals with questions related to the period of imperialism, such as the nature and role of the state, the development of monopoly capital, militarism, fascism, racism, etc. There are also a couple of appendices, one of which consists of an interesting extract from Hilferding's *Finance Capital* entitled "The Ideology of Imperialism."

If you are interested in the easy reading of a popular novel, please don't bother. Besides the ordinary difficulties associated with highly theoretical treatment of politico-economic problems, we have the added difficulty of algebraic formulae and equations, and these not always of the simplest kind. Your mathematical difficulties will be limited most likely to Chapter VII and the appendix to Chapter X, and if you cannot follow the mathematics through, you can still get the reasoning.

Sweezy's treatment of the qualitative nature of value as a social relationship, manifesting itself as something entirely different, as a relationship between things (commodities), is on the whole excellent. He calls attention to the historical character of Marxist thought and explains Marx' method of abstractions and successive approximation. Paradoxical as it may seem, this abstraction is in a way the most concrete sort of reasoning, and without it Marx could never have reached such pinnacles of scientific achievement and given us a trustworthy insight into the laws of motion of capitalist society.

BUT when it comes to the question of periodic crises, I have a bone to pick with our author. It all revolves around his insistence on rehabilitating an "underconsumption theory" and wrapping it in the cloak of Marxism. It is all very well to translate, if possible, the scientific concepts of political economy into the accustomed jargon of bourgeois economics or the practical terminology of the ordinary business world. But beyond a certain point the limitations of the term employed by the business world and its "economics" for business purposes must inevitably warp our thinking.

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THE COMMUNIST

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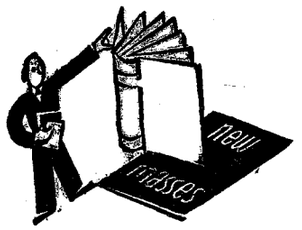

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True, in a measure Sweezy seems to hew to the basic facts of bourgeois production relations: the contradiction between the tendency toward unlimited expansion of the productive forces and the restrictive consumption of the people, which is inherent in the capital-wage labor relationship. Social democracy, which was inclined to tackle the problem not fundamentally, not from the standpoint of the historically transient nature of the mode of production, but merely from the palliative viewpoint of attempting to patch up and adjust the mode of production, looked upon the crises of overproduction, correctly so defined by Marx and Engels, as a problem of consumption. Hence, raise the people's level of consumption, raise their wages, and your crises would tend to disappear. At least, that would be the logic of ordinary common sense. But, as Engels would say, once ordinary common sense, good fellow that he is, ventures beyond the limits of his four walls, he meets with all kinds of unforeseen adventures.

The struggle against a reduction of the workers' living standards is imposed upon us by the conditions of capitalism. By fighting against the barriers to an expanded working class consumption, the proletarian struggle reflects the revolt of the productive forces against the bourgeois limitations of production. And this regardless of the degree of consciousness of the proletariat as to its historical role. But expanding the consumption of the workers is its own justification and requires no theory that crises are due to underconsumption and that such crises can be resolved through a rise in wages. This is nothing but the familiar "purchasing power" cry of liberal bourgeois thought of the recent period. Just put more money into circulation and presto! crises and depression disappear. In other words, don't start from the standpoint of production, thus driving to the fundamental nature of the economic system; start from the derivative relations of production and skim along the surface. That has usually been the position of bourgeois economists who take money as their starting point. It cannot be the standpoint of science.

Sweezy refers to Marx' contention that crises break upon us just in that phase of the periodic cycle when wages, hence mass consumption, are at their highest. Yet, in formulating his theory of underconsumption he attributes crises to "a restricted volume of consumption demand—restricted by low wages plus capitalists' 'tendency to accumulate.'" What the lowness of the wages have to do with it is a mystery because the lower the wages, the higher the rate of profit, and the effect of the falling tendency of the rate of profit in promoting stagnation and crises would tend to be counteracted. It is really not a question of high or low wages at all. It is a question of the historical content of the capital-wage labor relationship as such. Whether wages are high or low, the basic capital-wage labor relationship is still with us and the problems associated with this relationship, including periodic crises, will still recur.

On a number of other questions Professor Sweezy's formulations leave something to be desired. For example, he writes that "many forms of property relations with their concomitant class structures have come and gone in the past, and there is no reason to assume that they will not continue to do so in the future." Does the author mean to imply that with the elimination of bourgeois property relations there is no reason to expect the advent of a society without classes? Such a society has already come into existence in the Soviet Union. I doubt whether the author intends to give the impression that a classless society is impossible, but statements such as the above leave room for misinterpretation.

Again, "today the entire banking system could be 'seized' in the United States . . . without causing more than a temporary ripple in the ranks of big capital." Some ripple!

And what is really wrong with defining finance capital as the merger of bank capital with industrial capital? Sweezy calls attention to "internal corporate financing," but does this negate the validity of Lenin's definition of finance capital?

In defining imperialism Professor Sweezy quotes Lenin, but adds that he gives Lenin's definition "minor qualifications." But whereas Lenin's definition begins in historical terms of inner content and process, Sweezy begins with an external status, the competitive footing of several advanced capitalist countries with reference to the world market for industrial products.

Professor Sweezy is also of the opinion that fascism started as a movement of the middle class and was later merged with the interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie. This is an error and would not have been made if the author had been guided by the Marxist truism that the ideology of a given historical period is that of its economically dominant class. The "new middle class" did serve as the instrument of fascism.

ONE must also take issue with Professor Sweezy's characterization of the present war as "in reality three distinct wars . . . a war of redivision . . . a war between capitalism and socialism . . . an anti-imperialist war." It is all well and good to recognize the imperialist origins of the war. But why not recognize the war's development into a single war of national liberation, essentially anti-fascist and anti-imperialist, in which certain imperialist forces are by events compelled to contribute toward the anti-imperialist struggle? It is true that defeatists and reactionaries would like to divide this global struggle into separate and distinct wars rather than separate theaters of war, but why should progressives play into their hands? For purposes of analysis we may consider each current in the war sepa-

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rately and evaluate the influence of each. But please put the pieces together again and give us the picture whole.

And after all, is the USSR fighting for socialism as against capitalism, or is it fighting a war of national defense and liberation? Of course, in waging such a war it necessarily fights to preserve its own socialist mode of production. But certainly it does not seek to impose socialist relations upon others. The Soviet leaders know quite well that socialism depends in each country primarily on that country's own internal development. Stalin in various speeches has emphasized the character of the war as one for the preservation and restoration of national independence and democratic liberties. The achievement of that objective in turn leaves each people the possibility of extending their democracy and transforming it into socialist democracy.

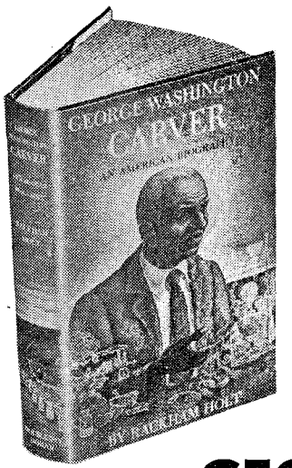
Though this review has been concerned largely with Professor Sweezy's errors, it ought to be said that his book shows a genuine desire to understand and learn from Marxism. In this respect Professor Sweezy stands head and shoulders over most of his colleagues. Whatever its shortcomings, *The Theory of Capitalist Development* is a provocative book that deserves serious study. BERNARD TAMARKIN.

The Kittyhawk Inventors

THE WRIGHT BROTHERS, *by Fred C. Kelly. Harcourt Brace. $3.50.*

IN A STRAIGHTFORWARD, reportorial account, Fred C. Kelly relates this remarkable story of American inventiveness, perseverance, and achievement in the field of aviation. The Wright brothers had read and mastered everything written about the new aeronautical science. Their first glider experiments were based on the results of the Lilienthal glider, the Santis-Dumont airship with propeller attachment and the rubber band propelled model created by Penaud. Lacking money to carry out their experiments with large scale airplanes, they devised a wind tunnel and made careful observations on toy models blown about in a current of air. To "repeal the law of gravitation," they built new motors, created propellers and ailerons, and constructed rudders and elevators. The problems of the reversal of air pressure on the wings, balance, and tailspin had to be solved to disprove the "unassailable logic and data" advanced by the erudite Prof. Simon Newcomb that "man couldn't fly."

Despite repeated flights at Kittyhawk, the press and the United States Army weren't interested. The brothers had been approached by various agents for European governments and decided to take their plane to France. The exhibitions in France were hailed as glorious achievements and they were recognized as great inventors



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when they returned to America. However, the historic plane of 1902 is now on display in a British museum because the learned scientific pontificos, directing the Smithsonian Institute, were hornswoggled into crediting Professor Langley with the invention. Glenn Curtiss, desiring to avoid payment on patent claims, improved the Langley model with many Wright devices and was instrumental in getting his agent appointed as an investigator by the Institute. Despite proof offered by the brothers, the Institute's annual reports have always listed Langley as the inventor. The author ends this long controversy with a statement published by the secretary of the Smithsonian in October 1942, to wit: "I sincerely regret that the Institution employed to make the tests of 1914 an agent who had been an unsuccessful defendant in patent litigation brought against him by the Wrights . . . I point out that Assistant Secretary Rathburn was mistaken when he stated that the Langley machine without modification made successful flights and . . . that Langley succeeded in building the first aeroplane capable of sustained free flight with a man . . . and should he [Orville Wright] decide to deposit the plane in the United States National Museum it would be given the highest place of honor, which is its due."

The modern Kittyhawk has proved its worth in the battles over El Alamein and Tunisia. Its counterparts, the Spitfires, Stormoviks, and Flying Fortresses will be the umbrella that shields the ground forces of the United Nations in the coming two-front warfare of 1943.

JAMES KNIGHT.

The Human Family

THE HILL, *by David Greenhood. Illustrated by Charles B. Wilson. Duell, Sloan & Pearce. $2.50.*

WABASH HILL is a ghost of an old gold-mining town. It houses around forty-odd people who live a truly communal life. Everything is shared. Even the author's old car is gradually borrowed away. And when he leaves, he seems to be flying back to civilization with some fear that he goes now or never. He had left San Francisco one night to escape from himself and his writing. He comes upon this community by accident, the backwash, maybe, of civilization, and he finds a group of people living very normally, completely unconditioned by desire for property.

Our writers often tend to treat backward peoples either as Tobacco Roaders or sentimentally. David Greenhood does not even treat them as backward. They are symbolic and they are real. The citizens of Wabash Hill live by mining just enough to get along. The rush for wealth is the past. They are the present. Sommers, once a mining foreman, runs the ruins of the old hotel. He is assisted by the town drunk, Blackie, everyone's charge. Sometimes, just as the author did, people drive by. The better ones stay awhile, the snobbish and too wealthy soon feel unwanted.

The post office is run by the village widow. She is no glamour girl, just very womanly, and every man in town loves her and every man's wife understands this and knows the widow can be trusted. The entire village gets together at jamborees in the old ruined ballroom. These dances are attended by the "100-year-old" Chinese woman, the town's most honored citizen. She had been brought to Wabash Hill, a "pleasure" girl when young. Her wisdom and long view are respected. The village cares for her. When the county takes her to the poor house, she is brought back; when her house burns, they build her a new one.

The townspeople enjoy the sunsets, the mountains, and meadows in their own way, without benefit of poets. They compose their own hymns:

When the rains wash the mountain
We'll see the Lord accounting
All the nuggets in the paydirt
For his ring.

The boardwalk of commercial days becomes the front porch; racial distinctions, politics—nothing can keep these people apart. David Greenhood's delightful humor and very sensitive penetration of normal human lives makes the reader, too, a citizen of Wabash Hill. He says in a foreword "The background [for this book] was chosen as one well suited to highlight certain human values which in American life are indestructible." Actually these sketches of life stories show us that, once free of competitive violences, people are one big family. You may argue that this is very individualistic and utopian. It could be. Mr. Greenhood's stories could slop over into sentimentality. They don't, because to him all people are complex enough and intelligent enough and just plain contrary enough to find life a pretty good thing on the whole. For this writer human life is sufficiently rich to be portrayed without drama. One does note, to be sure, that *The Hill* is settled mostly by the middle-aged and the very young. The one young couple there seems frustrated.

Naturally this book offers no solution for our present day complex problems. It is based, however, on the one important conception that people not made violent by competition for jobs and money, are fundamentally decent—that the human family is one. I think the author has seen that in order to get even *this lesson* across, one has to choose a simplified pattern of culture.

The book is very interestingly illustrated by a talented artist, Charles Wilson, who knows the types of characters well. He is, I understand, himself part Indian.

EDA LOU WALTON.

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CANVAS AND FILM

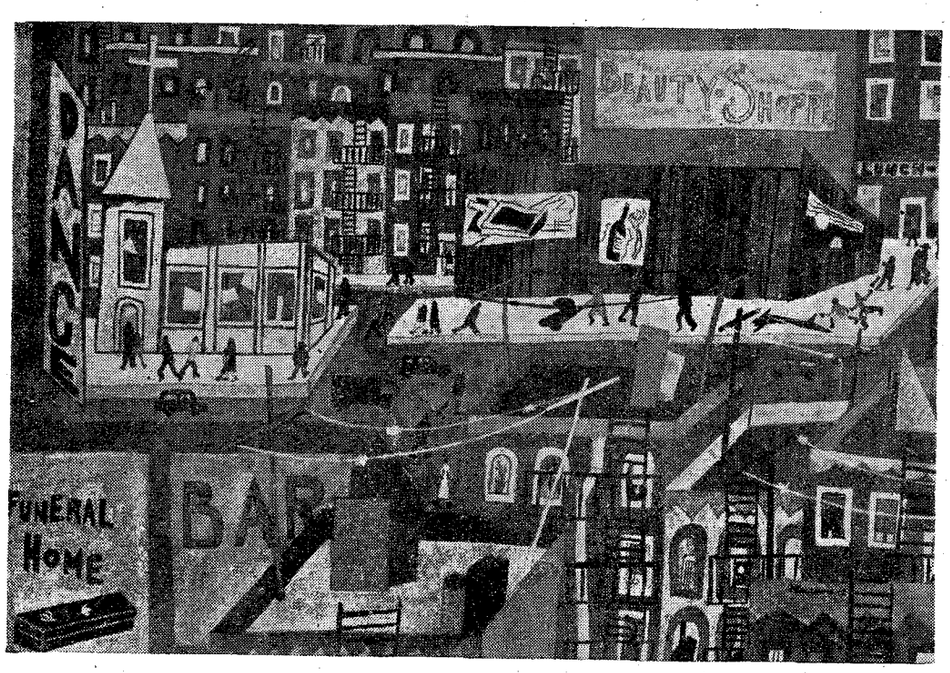
The young Negro artist Jacob Lawrence depicts Harlem in a series of paintings, reviewed by Mayer Symason. . . . Joy Davidman reports on some of Hollywood's lighter productions.

EACH of the thirty gouaches which Jacob Lawrence, the young Negro painter, exhibited at the Downtown Gallery last week had its own artistic interest. But it was the cumulative effect of all of them as a study of Negro life in Harlem which made the exhibition an artistic event of prime importance. Just as in his "Migration" series, which was reproduced in *Fortune* in 1941, Lawrence has created under the title of "Harlem" a set of illustrations which constitute a sociological study of an important aspect of American Negro life. This is the first time that a Negro artist—or for that matter any artist—has given us a coherent picture of everyday life in New York's Jim Crow ghetto.

"Harlem" is presented as a sociological panorama based on the facts of normal existence, not the surface aspects which have become zoot-suited cliches in the hands of too many American artists. Lawrence tells a vivid story of a people living, working, playing, and dying amidst poverty, squalor, and oppression. But he tells his story without sentimentality. As a Negro, Jacob Lawrence feels and understands more deeply than can any white painter the sufferings of his people, yet the outstanding characteristic of his style is restraint. He does not wear his sympathy upon his sleeve. His hope and his understanding are inherent in the project itself, in the story which is so simple and telling, and in the complete truth with which it presents his people, not as irresponsible children, or criminals, or objects of charity, but as human beings with economic, social, and cultural problems.

It is, of course, not entirely Jacob Lawrence's fault that the critic of the *Sun* was charmed rather than horrified by his treatment of fire-traps and funerals. Apparently delighted by the impression that Lawrence is more interested in color and pattern than in the tribulations of his people, that critic magnanimously promises him a kind of immortality. "It is," he writes, "because Mr. Lawrence rises so triumphantly above his subject matter that success is conceivable for him. Long after the poor whites of *Tobacco Road* have been eliminated by starvation and all the residents of Harlem have risen to affluence because of the present interest in their welfare, these water colors may continue to give pleasure just because of a certain handsomeness they have." One cannot expect the *Sun's* critic, who has always shown a blind spot for social art, to understand the significance of Jacob Lawrence's work. So it would probably be useless to point out to him that Lawrence's artistic life blood is his social attitude—and that just those aspects of his style which our colleague finds so pleasing tend to limit the consummation of the artist's purpose. However, the critic, by his very misunderstanding of the artist's intention, has stumbled upon Lawrence's basic weakness.

For the abstract quality of the artist's style serves, unfortunately, to obscure the inherent human warmth. While his objectivity is a source of strength, it is also a wall that limits his effectiveness. The sociological foundation of Lawrence's art creates in itself a condition of objectivity, a framework of factual statements. True, Lawrence visualizes these facts in deep and simple human terms. The statement, "Most of the people are very poor; rent is high; food is high," is translated into a stark and tragic composition of a Negro woman seated alone at the table in a bare room, contemplating her meager funds. Here is



"This is Harlem" and "Most of the People Are Very Poor." Gouache paintings by Jacob Lawrence from his recent exhibit at the Downtown Gallery, New York City.

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an original and moving symbol conceived as a restrained statement of poverty, evoking all the mental anguish and physical suffering of marginal living. But this symbol is itself reduced to an elemental form as spare as the original fact. And here the question arises, whether Lawrence, in an effort to achieve a striking symbol, does not sacrifice too much of the human quality of his subject.

In his desire to be objective the artist consciously limits himself to simplified forms and to a bold and primitive color system, which he uses with a bright, harsh intensity. Compared with the earlier "Migration" series his color has become colder. The earth colors, so expressive of southern agrarian life, have given way to the more blatant shades of blue, red, yellow, and green, as more representative of the city with its garish facade, strident sound, and violent activity.

The artist's efforts at simplification and stylization often approach perilously close to caricature. In certain cases there is even evidence of an unconscious absorption of chauvinistic attitude, as in his treatment of dancing, vaudeville, and religion. He never exploits that chauvinism as do such painters as Reginald Marsh and in the larger picture these few minor failings recede, for the whole is so consistent in its power and truth.

The warmth which Lawrence still lacks may some day come to him, for he is still a young man; when it does his art will become infinitely more telling as an instrument in the struggle for Negro liberation. He is even today a credit to his people, another example of their amazing cultural fertility, and an important new figure in the ranks of the social artists of America.

MAYER SYMASON.

★

UNQUESTIONABLY the American film industry has developed the world's smoothest technique. Other film makers, perhaps, can photograph even more beautifully, but no others can give scenery and women and kitchen equipment so bright a gloss. Lighting, recording, synchronizing, and editing are exquisitely precise. Flesh has the texture of lily petals, clothes and houses seem made of some unimaginable plastic of the future. Indeed, a Hollywood film is a masterpiece of painstaking construction long before it ever hits the camera.

Given a significant subject Hollywood's technique can present it with luminous clarity. Yet sometimes the perfect technique is considered its own excuse for being, or the excuse for displaying somebody's curves, somebody else's high C. Such things get by, because the studio lighting and the fancy sets and costumes and people are so pleasant to the eye; because years of painstaking work on cameras and sound recorders, the labor of researchers and technicians, of designers and costumers have dressed the film up so prettily. They get by because the transitions are so effortless, the concepts presented so childishly simple, that movies become as soothing as the smell of incense.

Consider film farce. *The More The Merrier* begins as a sprightly thing enough; it has a lot of fun with the present housing shortage in Washington, more fun certainly than anybody in Washington is having with it. It clicks along like an adding machine, adding wisecrack to wisecrack. There is some genuine laughter in it, and the engaging comedy technique of Charles Coburn gives it a warmth it could not have achieved without him. Also there is Jean Arthur, whose particular brand of charm is far less cloying than the usual screen article. And the technique, the neat, smooth, mechanical technique!

Yet the whole aim of the film is to rush past you as fast as a subway express, so that you won't notice when its introductory wit gives place to dull hokum. A boy, a girl, and a matchmaker in a too-small apartment; given this beginning, you can write your own script and save the price of a movie. To stretch the stuff out, the film's authors have introduced a really nasty touch—the girl is at first engaged to an elderly fiance, one of those Mean Men who believe that business ought to plan before acting! Humor of the roughest sort is another faithful plot-stretcher. Most of us are long past the age when the funniest thing in the world is a prattfall, and the next funniest a struggle to get into the bathroom. Some producers, however, continue to make films which, like *The More The Merrier*, can only be described as bathroom farce.

NEXT, let us consider the horse opera. There was once a real Wild West where real people lived, and they had real problems and agonies and struggles—*The Ox-Bow Incident* showed what could be done with them. Yet why bother? Easier to be slick; to produce a pink and blue and green *Desperadoes* with a lot of pretty horses and scenery. Plot? Well, wheel out that old Model-T plot about the bad boy and the sheriff who wants to reform him, spruce her up a little bit with a couple of new girls. . . . We've been using that plot thutty year and there ain't a dent in her. . . .

Or consider the horror film, which is spawning these days like some prolific octopus. Some people work off their war tension in hysterical jitterbugging, like the Strand Theater crowds who prevented me from getting to review *Action in the North Atlantic* this week. Some, almost always men, have a stranger method; they go to see films in which young girls are spectacularly murdered by a fiend. Now the horror film can and often does reach high art, especially in psychological studies like *Night Must Fall*, or in the occasional inspired ghost story. *I Walked With A Zombie*, one

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of the most recent bloodcurdlers, is long on atmosphere and makes a real effort at artistry. Its background is supplied by Negro actors, particularly the enchanting Theresa Harris, who are expert at conveying a sense of hovering tragedy. They are portrayed with much exaggeration as voodoo-worshippers on a West Indian isle, yet they are allowed human dignity and intelligence when presented as individuals.

But the foreground! Lord help us, the love triangles in the foreground, and the goopy-eyed female who floats through the film pretending to be one of the Walking Dead! To build up all that atmosphere, and then use it for a reshuffling of wives!

If *I Walked With A Zombie*, with its fundamental silliness, still seems a good example of the type, that is because films like *The Leopard Man* are allowed to exist. There was only one reason for making *The Leopard Man*; it was to get half-clothed young girls into dark alleys and slowly tear them to pieces. The very camera seems to gloat during the process. It is rare indeed that an art form does impair anybody's morals; but if the ravenings and gnashings of *The Leopard Man* do not affect the deranged as a screen adjuration, Go Thou And Do Likewise, this reviewer lost her dinner for nothing.

Such films usually clothe their shame with a few pious ejaculations of horror, or pretend to be realistic psychological studies; and indeed *The Leopard Man*, like much tenth-rate horror stuff, borrows what glimmerings of sense it has from Fritz Lang's classic study of a lunatic murderer, *M*. Yet there is a world of difference between the pitiable, sordid, tortured child-killer of *M* and the voluptuous pouncing of *The Leopard Man*. Here we have a grotesque instance of how a Puritan censorship works. The Hays office, so alert to prevent all decent and sober discussion of such human problems as divorce, could not see *The Leopard Man* was filth.

FRANCO allowed the March of Time to photograph the scenes in its *Inside Fascist Spain* issue, recently released. So it is to be assumed that he is proud of the drilling and marching children, listening to fascist lectures; proud of "public works" to house fascist officials; proud of the watery soup he gives starving women and children. He is proud too, no doubt, of the achievement of forcing republican prisoners to give the fascist salute, prisoners whom the *March of Time's* commentary points out were sentenced for "no crime at all." This poverty, this slavery, are Franco's cherished accomplishments in Spain, and he likes to show them off to the world. The *March of Time* short records what it can, and frequently illuminates what it records with incisive comment. But if these revelations are what Franco shows the world, what must be the things he conceals?

JOY DAVIDMAN.

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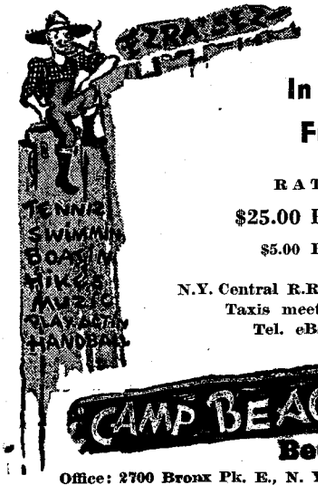

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